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THE

MODERN THEATRE;

A COLLECTION OF

SUCCESSFUL MODERN PLAYS,

AS ACTED AT

THE THEATRES ROYAL, LONDON.

PRINTED FROM THE PROMPT BOOKS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS.

SELECTED BY

MRS INCHBALD.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

IMPOSTORS. RAMAH DROOG.
WIFE OF TWO HUSBANDS. LAW OF LOMBARDY.
BRAGANZA.

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THE

IMPOSTORS;

A

COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

BY

RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Solomon Sapient,	*Mr Baddeley.*
Captain George Sapient,	*Mr Aickin.*
Sir Charles Freemantle,	*Mr Barrymore.*
Lord Janus,	*Mr Palmer.*
Polycarp,	*Mr Wroughton.*
Oliver,	*Mr Suett.*
Philibert,	*Mr Lamash.*
Eleanor,	*Mrs Jordan.*
Mrs Dorothy,	*Miss Pope.*

THE

IMPOSTORS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Saloon in SIR SOLOMON'S *House.*

SIR SOLOMON SAPIENT *and* CAPTAIN GEORGE SAPIENT, *meeting.*

Capt Geo. Good morning to you, brother.

Sir Sol. Most valorous and renowned captain, give me your hand. How fares it, my brave fellow?

Capt Geo. I am glad to see you so merry, brother Solomon.

Sir Sol. Merry and wise too, or I have that name for nothing. I warrant now you have had your turn upon the terrace, pacing up and down to the measure of your old quarter-deck—isn't it so?

Capt. Geo. Ay, ay, habit is every thing. Is your noble guest the viscount Janus stirring yet?

Sir Sol. Not yet, not yet: I am waiting here to give his lordship the good morning.

Capt Geo. Then you mustn't wait much longer, let me tell you, or it will be mid-day before his morning's begun: give him a good rowze instead of it, and pipe all hands to breakfast.

Sir Sol. What kind of manners wou'd that be, friend George? We must have no rowzing nor piping here; no such sea noises with a nobleman of his high birth and breeding. Where are all my fellows? Where is Oliver?

OLIVER *enters.*

Oliv. Here am I, your worship; here is Oliver.

Sir Sol. And a precious Hottentot you have made of yourself. Is that a trim to wait upon a lord in? Go, get you gone, you lazy whelp, and let me see you in your new livery; slip on your other skin, and then present my compliments to Lord Janus, and beg to know how he has rested.

Capt Geo. Chearly, my good fellow! Dowse your foul-weather flag, and hoist your holiday colours in honour of the occasion.

Oliv. Well, if it must be so, it must, your worship; but I'd as soon be set in the pillory as foisted into that new-fangled doublet. [*Going.*

Sir Sol. And hark ye, sir, a word with you—Let me hear no more of your worship; leave off your quarter-sessions cant, and speak to me in a language such as well-bred ears are used to.

Oliv. As how, forsooth?

Sir Sol. This it is: When you speak of me, let it be by my proper stile and title, Sir Solomon Sapient; when you speak to me, simple Sir Solomon will suffice.

Oliv. Simple Sir Solomon, it shall suffice.

[*Exit* OLIVER.

Sir Sol. The czar Peter was not more plagued to trim the beards and whiskers of his Muscovites, than I to trim these clod-pated bumpkins out of their long skirts and pudding-cuffs.

Capt Geo. And after all, do you think 'em worth the pains? Surely my friend Oliver is at least a match for Monsieur Philibert, the little ugly Jew-like fellow, that calls himself Lord Janus's valet-de-chambre. His lordship's suite is not very splendid.

Sir Sol. That's true, George; you say true: Lord Janus does not affect pomp; he travels as 't were incognito. His lordship at this distance from the capital may be liken'd to a comet in the extremity of its orbit; when he approaches to the point of his attraction he will send forth a shining and a brilliant train: Lord Janus is a man of speculation and inquiry.

Capt Geo. And shou'd'nt you be a man of inquiry too, brother Solomon?

Sir Sol. And where wou'd your wisdom send me to inquire? Of Collins's Peerage? I have his pedigree by heart; I can trace him from the heptarchy: his very title of Janus proves the circumspection of his ancestors; 'tis as much as to say they had all their eyes about 'em: his armorial bearings are typical of sagacity; two vizors in a wreath of serpents: his supporters are an allegory; on the dexter side a fox, denoting cunning; on the sinister a goose, which is the emblem of wariness.

Capt. Geo. I wish you wou'd take a lesson from that wary goose.

Sir Sol. I shall take a lesson from no goose, nor go to one for counsel, so pr'ythee spare your pains in advising me. Why will you concern yourself in a business that is out of your line? Why will you be thrusting in your oar?

Capt. Geo. 'Twou'd not be the first I've handled by a pretty many, if I did.

Sir Sol. Then keep to your element, dear George, keep to your element, the boisterous ocean: you have not made human nature your study; you have not been in the world, as I have.

Capt. Geo. I have been round it, brother.

Sir Sol. Ay, there's the case; you have peel'd the orange, but not tasted the fruit. I am the man, the happy man, who, when I first set eyes upon this noble peer, intuitively developed all the latent virtues of his heart; and now you shall know, George, that I expect his lordship to propose for Eleanor out of hand.

Capt. Geo. I don't doubt it.

Sir Sol. And why don't you doubt it?

Capt. Geo. Because my niece will have a fine fortune, and what is more, is a very fine girl.

Sir Sol. Hush! here comes Monsieur Philibert.

PHILIBERT *enters.*

Phil. Ah! bonjour, gentlemen bote! I have de honor to wish you de very goot morning; to my noble patròn premiérement, and to Monsieur le Capitaine also.

Sir Sol. Good day to you, Monsieur Philibert. I hope your noble lord and master rested well last night?

Phil. I tank you; Grace a Dieu, he has slept like a leetle pig; he make you very many basemains, and demand ten tousand pardon, for dat he is occupèe with one gentleman who is just arrivè de Londres, with beaucoup d'affaires for him and papiers, ma foi, plus interressantes.

Sir Sol. Who is the gentleman, may I ask?

Phil. Ah! he is very great man to mi lor; he is all in all to mi lor; his avocât; his what-d'ye-call-it; his homme d'affaires; his Monsieur, Monsieur—(peste!) Ah! je comprens—Monsieur Polycarp—Mais, voila! mi lor, soi meme—Ah! je suis ravi; he is habilie to a merveil.

[LORD JANUS *runs in, and embraces* SIR SOLOMON.

Ld Jan. My dear Sir Solomon, I have broke from business to embrace you, and apologize for the intrusion I have made upon your morning hours, by the sudden arrival of my friend and agent Mr Polycarp, a very necessary man to my affairs.

Sir Sol. My lord, my lord, I pray you no apology to me. Sha'n't I have the honour of seeing the gentleman?

Ld Jan. Your politeness overpowers me. Mr Polycarp is a most excellent man, unwearied in his attentions to my interest; he is, in fact, my right hand; a very trusty person, and a true friend.

Sir Sol. Good, my lord: any friend of yours must be welcome here: I pray you make my poor house your own. Won't you be pleas'd to send to the gentleman, or shall I attend upon him?

Ld Jan. By no means—Philibert, écoutez! Go to Mr Polycarp, and tell him I shall have the honour of presenting him to Sir Solomon.

Phil. I go, mi lor. [*Exit.*

Ld Jan. Worthy Captain Sapient, I kiss your hands; I protest I did not see you.

Capt. Geo. My lord, your very humble servant—If you are upon business, I beg I may retire.

Ld Jan. I humbly entreat you will not; I flatter myself you will stay and be my advocate with your lovely niece, when I have Sir Solomon's permission to cast myself at her feet.

Sir Sol. I fancy your lordship will want no advocate there.

Ld Jan. It transports me with joy to hear you say so—The arrival of this gentleman is most opportune for my wishes; he is perfectly confidential, and will satisfy you in all particulars.

Sir Sol. My lord, this conduct is truly noble and explicit; and be assured your lordship's alliance cannot fail to reflect the greatest honour and happiness

upon me and my family—This is the gentleman, I presume.

POLYCARP *enters, followed by* PHILIBERT, *carrying two red trunks for papers, &c.*

Ld Jan. This is my friend Polycarp, Sir Solomon—Mr Polycarp, I have now the pleasure of making you known to my honour'd host Sir Solomon Sapient, a gentleman from whom I look to derive all my future happiness in life.—This, sir, is the brave Captain Sapient, brother of Sir Solomon, a name that does honour to the naval annals of Old England.

Pol. I honour both the one and the other as I do the mirror of wisdom and the soul of valour. [*Bowing to each alternately.*]—Sir Solomon, I blush to say I must begin my acquaintance by requesting a favour of you. Here are two trunks belonging to my noble client; their contents most valuable and important; I request a safe deposit for them in your strong box or closet: we can never be too careful of the property of our employers.

Ld Jan. That is so like your methodical formality, friend Polycarp: I dare say there's nothing in 'em but some fusty parchments.

Pol. I don't know how fusty they may be, but I know they are good for ten thousand a-year.

Sir Sol. If they were ten times ten, they shall be forthcoming. Brother George, have the goodness to put them in my iron chest in the audit-chamber: here is the key. [*Gives it to the Captain.*

Ld Jan. Pardon me, Sir Solomon; I cannot think of Captain Sapient being troubled with such lumber.

Capt. Geo. Not at all, my lord; no trouble at all. I'll stow 'em away safe, never fear.

[*Exit with the boxes.*

Pol. And if you take 'em for your pains, you'll have no prize. [*Aside.*

Ld Jan. Seriously, Mr Polycarp, this is being too

punctilious, as if they wou'd not be safe enough any where in this house.

Pol. I hope this house will have an interest in them by and by, my lord; at present you must let me take my own way.

Ld Jan. Well, well, be it so. I hope they contain wherewithal to furnish a good jointure for the loveliest of women; and for a clear title and a clean property, I trust my deeds may vie with any man's, as Mr Polycarp can witness.

Pol. Yes, truly, were all men's deeds like your lordship's, there wou'd be little employ for the conveyancers—The hangman's office would have all the custom. [*Aside.*

Ld Jan. And now, my good Sir Solomon, a truce to business; let us attend upon the ladies at their dejeunè.

Sir Sol. With all my heart.—Who waits?

OLIVER *enters, newly equipt.*

Oliv. Your worship—(hold, there I'm out again;) simple Sir Solomon will serve for this turn—what are your commands?

Sir Sol. Oliver, where is my cousin Dorothy and my daughter Eleanor?

Oliv. Madam Dorothy, so please you, is expecting you at the breakfast table, and, under favour, the good lady fumes as furiously as the tea-kettle; she is cruelly out of patience. Miss Eleanor is not yet come in from her ride.

Sir Sol. So we go on in the country, Mr Polycarp:—fresh air and wholesome exercise, a gallop on the downs before breakfast, and a plunge into the cold bath for a bracer; this is our regimen; these are the only beauty-washes we make use of.

Pol. No wonder my noble patron here cannot stand the battery, when his fair assailant keeps her artillery in such order.

Ld Jan. Ah! Polycarp, when you behold the charmer—

Pol. I do behold a charmer.

[*To* MRS DOROTHY, *as she enters.*

MRS DOROTHY *enters as* POLYCARP *is speaking, and curtsies to him.*

Sir Sol. No, no, Mr Polycarp, this is only cousin Dorothy.

Oliv. Lord love your heart, this is not our miss.

Mrs Dor. Silence, ruffian! [*To* OLIVER, *angrily.*

Phil. Ay, ay, taisez vous, Monsieur Olivier; taisez vous. [*Apart to* OLIVER.

Oliv. Not I; I have no desire to *taste.*

Ld Jan. Permit me, lady fair, to present to you my friend Mr Polycarp, a bachelor, and a very great practitioner, I assure you. Mr Polycarp's is a name well known at the bar.

Pol. Yes, madam, I may boast of having made some little figure there in my time.

Mrs Dor. Your good breeding will entitle you to figure any where.

Pol. With so fair an advocate to recommend me.

Mrs Dor. In politer courts than those of Westminster Hall.

Pol. In the chamber of the ladies I should be most proud to be a counsellor.

Mrs Dor. Your good address, sir, cannot fail to recommend you to the good graces of the ladies.

Pol. There is one, I must confess, I am interested to be known to in the most favourable light.

Mrs Dor. The lady must stand greatly in her own light, who does not favour so much modesty and refinement of behaviour. Shall I have the honour to show you the way to the breakfast room?

Pol. Gratify me in the mean time with the felicity of your fair hand. (*Hands her out with much ceremony.*)

[*Exeunt* POLYCARP *and* MRS DOROTHY.

Sir Sol. Upon my word, Lord Janus, this friend of yours is a man of great gallantry.

Ld Jan. The veriest Philander in nature. Allons! Let us follow. [*Exit with* SIR SOL.

Phil. He bien! Monsieur Olivier, what you tink of all dis? Will your young lady marry mi lor?

Oliv. That's hereafter as it may be, mounseer.

Phil. As it may be? She may be one very happy voman with mi lor.

Oliv. So his worship seems to think.

Phil. Ah! his vorship is very vise man indeet to tink so; he have all de sagesse of King Solomon himself; and upon my vort, his vorship make very pretty liverie for de matrimonie of his daughter.

Oliv. Yes, and methinks 'tis not unlike matrimony, for it sticks plaguy close to a man: when a body's once into it, there's no getting out of it. Mark how these two flappets fly asunder! There's more matrimony for you: man and wife can't quarrel with a better will.

Phil. Ay, ay, 'tis in de last cut of de fashion.

Oliv. I wish it may prove the last, for I never desire to wear such another.

Phil. Pardon me: you wear it very well—Turn yourself about, mon ami; let-a-me look of you behint. Ah! dat is pretty well—Encore! Atother side—turn yourself again—He bien! Without flattery, mon cher Olivier, you have great deal of de bonne grace.

Oliv. Zooks! a man shou'd have nothing but *bones* to be ramm'd into this jacket: I warrant there is not more cloth upon my back than wou'd serve to cover a christening pin-cushion.

Phil. Well, well, be content: 'tis made to shew your shapes.

Oliv. Very likely; there's nothing thrown away but the labour.

Phil. Morbleau! here is mi lor again—Allons, mon ami; let us be gone. [*Exeunt.*

LORD JANUS *and* POLYCARP *enter.*

Ld Jan. Too much, too much—by my soul, Jack, I cannot stand it; let me have some breath, or I shall burst.

Pol. The old girl swallows the bait glibly, does she not?

Ld Jan. No wonder, when you butter it so unmercifully: how is it you can keep your countenance?

Pol. Ask rather how my countenance keeps me; I owe it many a good turn at a hard pinch, and now, methinks, 'tis high time to marry and be honest.

Ld Jan. Hold there, friend Jack! If we are both to play the same game, he that's first up may chance to spoil the other's hand.

Pol. Content yourself about that; and though you are Harry Singleton every where else, you shall be Lord Janus here, and have all your privileges of being first served; then I hope your humble servant may have leave to help himself. Fair Eleanor is the dish of all dainties at the head of the table; plain Dorothy is the piece de resistance at the foot of it.

Ld Jan. Enough said: If that be so, I am content.

Pol. Commend me to your modesty for that. 'Foregad, I think the man that takes Dame Dorothy's person will have fairly earn'd her purse: strangle me if I wou'd be plagued with her, but that I begin to think a little snug retreat would be seasonable; some little property, that I may fairly call my own.

Ld Jan. That might prevent mistakes, to be sure: if you had property of your own, you need not trouble other people for their's so often as you have done.

Pol. That's true: hitherto I have only had right of common upon the wide world: marriage is like a bill of inclosure, by which every man has his own lot to himself.

Ld Jan. Yes, and he may keep it to himself, so long as he can fence out his neighbours; but that is not often the case.

Pol. Dorothy will be a good stake in my hedge however: he that breaks into her pasture must risk more in the attack than he can profit by the trespass.

Ld Jan. I confess there is enough to baulk a bolder sportsman than I pretend to be; but keep your eye upon Sir Solomon; he is lord of the manor here, and if nobody claims Dorothy, she and her strong box will fall as an escheat to him.

Pol. If you will take care of his daughter, I think I may promise to provide for Dorothy, and thus between us we may give him a sinecure for the rest of his days.

Ld Jan. And when all his cares are over, I will quietly lay down my peerage, retire from the gaieties of the world, and live like a plain country gentleman, in this plain country house.

Pol. I guess you will prefer it for your summer residence to Janus Castle itself?

Ld Jan. Yes, I shall put that aside as a jointure-house for my lady.

Pol. Right. We will keep that snug in the red box with the rest of the deeds, which Sir Solomon has taken charge of; if it escapes out of his hands, let him look to the loss; it is not our business to disturb such quiet property.

Ld Jan. But after all, what say you to Solomon? Is he not a precious fellow?

Pol. I like him better than I do that same Captain Bluff; I don't know what to think of him.

Ld Jan. Never think about him: those web-footed fowl are nimble on the water, but mere waddlers upon land.

Pol. And what for a girl is Miss Eleanor the heiress?

Ld Jan. A wood-nymph, a hamadryad; light as ether, fresh as air, and altogether, my dear Jack, so adorably charming, that if I had not such an uncontroulable, inexpressible passion for her fortune, I am apt to think I should be in love with her for her person.

Pol. What are we about then? If we are lovers, let us follow up the fair. Dorothy and I lost ground at the starting; and my old girl is no Atalanta; neither light as ether nor fresh as air; but remember the old fable, where the tortoise wins the race from the hare. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The Park, with a view of SIR SOLOMON'S *House.*

SIR CHARLES FREEMANTLE, ELEANOR *in her riding-habit.*

Sir Char. Now I have set you safe upon your feet, and you assure me you have got no hurt by your fall, give me leave to say you have had such an escape, as will make it madness if you ever mount the back of that vicious animal any more.

Ele. Yes, we call her the vixen mare: she wou'd

have shewn me no mercy if I had hung in my stirrup, and that I must have done, if it had not been for you: I shall always believe I owe my life to you.

Sir Char. And I shall always consider it as the happiest moment of mine which brought me to your rescue. May I not know the lady's name I have been thus fortunate in assisting?

Ele. I live at this house which you see; I am the daughter of Sir Solomon Sapient: you are a strangar in these parts I perceive.

Sir Char. I am a traveller, and far from my own home; but though I am a stranger to you, and may never have the happiness of meeting you again, yet I hope you will allow me to request one favour of you.

Ele. Pray do, and I'll grant it, be it what it will.

Sir Char. As this adventure has for ever fix'd you in my memory, it will be much for my repose in future, wou'd you give me your faithful promise never to commit yourself to that vixen mare, as you call her, any more.

Ele. Goodness alive! do you call that a favour? You must be very kind-hearted, to be at such concern about me; but at all events, I give you my promise, and if you doubt my keeping it, let the servant take the mare away with him.

Sir Char. I shou'd put her to death the next moment, were she mine.

Ele. Bless your heart! our folks only laugh at such accidents—But pray now step into the house, and rest yourself after your fatigue.

Sir Char. I'm afraid I cannot now avail myself of your politeness.

Ele. Politeness! Not at all. Do now—you might if you wou'd; pray do—never mind your boots; there's no ceremony—Mercy be good unto me! what a pickle I am in! Only look what a petticoat I have got.

Sir Char. Come, you are well off to have hurt nothing but your clothes.

Ele. Oh! hang my clothes; they are used to it. I thought at first I had put out my ankle: Look what a wrench I have given it. Hey-day, what's here to do? Will you be so good to put the lacing of my boot to rights? Don't you go to say any thing to papa about my fall.

Sir Char. Will you conceal it from your father?

[SIR CHARLES *adjusts her boot.*

Ele. Why, ay to be sure—Heh!—what!—isn't it right? Nay, I won't do it, if you think 'tis wrong—Dear! how awkward you go about it; why, that's not the way. Here! I'll shew you. You should pass it through here—Now you're right.—And so you don't think I shou'd sink this accident on my father?

Sir Char. Perhaps I don't think a young lady shou'd sink any thing on her father.

Ele. Ah, but that—that won't always do though—will it?

Sir Char. Heavens! this girl bewitches me—*(Aside.)* I shou'd guess you have no secrets you need conceal from your father.

Ele. That's as much as to say you guess I have no secrets at all.

Sir Char. Let this little misadventure then stand for one, and when you are at the pains of keeping one, will you consent, at my request, to keep another?

Ele. By all means: tell it me.

Sir Char. This it is then—If I converse with you five minutes longer, I shall be absolutely and irrecoverably in love with you for life.

Ele. Indeed! Well, five minutes are soon gone; don't be in a hurry—Hush! hark! what talking's that? Sure I hear my father's voice. Stay where you are—don't be afraid—I'll be sure to come back to you. [*She runs out.*

SIR CHARLES *alone.*

What possesses me? I am fascinated, fix'd, spell-bound by the wand of an enchantress: the place is full of charms and filtres; she has sprinkled love-powder in the air, and every breath I draw brings infection to my heart.

ELEANOR *returns hastily.*

Ele. 'Tis my father, sure enough. Oh, my giddy head; I forgot to ask by what name I am to introduce you to him.

Sir Char. Freemantle is my name; if you think fit, you may add Sir Charles to it.

Ele. Sir Charles Freemantle—a baronet—I wish you had been a lord.—I charge you don't run away.

SIR SOLOMON SAPIENT *enters.*

Sir Sol. I met your servant with your horses, and he says you've had a fall. My dear child, is all well? are you safe and unhurt?

Ele. Thanks to this gentleman for saving me, I have received no manner of hurt.

Sir Sol. I am infinitely indebted to the gentleman; but I have not the happiness of knowing him.

Ele. It is Sir Charles—Sir Charles—Pray, sir, tell my father your name.

Sir Char. Freemantle is my name.

Sir Sol. Of the county of Kent, good sir?

Sir Char. I live in Kent, sir.

Sir Sol. I know your family full well; a very ancient and respectable house: I have the honour to rank next to you, Sir Charles, upon the roll of baronets. In very truth, sir, you have restored to me the only hopes of my family: if there is any thing Sir Solomon Sapient can do to shew his gratitude and respect to you, I answer to that name, and shall

be most happy to approve myself your very humble servant in all bounden duty.

Sir Char. I am overpaid, Sir Solomon, by my great good fortune in chancing upon this young lady as I was travelling the road, just where her horse begun a plunging: by a sudden spring from the back of mine, I caught her in my arms as she was falling, and seizing hold of her rein at the same time, held the mischievous animal fast by the head, till I had extricated her foot from the stirrup. And now give me leave to remark to you, Sir Solomon, that had I a life so precious in my charge, I shou'd hold myself unpardonable, were I to expose it to such danger any more.

Sir Sol. There, there, Eleanor, you hear what Sir Charles says.

Ele. Yes, papa, and I have promised to observe what he says. Isn't he very kind, to take so much concern about me?

Sir Sol. I protest and swear I am more bound to you, Sir Charles, than I can find words to express. I pray you, worthy sir, let me improve the happy moment of our meeting. I think you said you was upon your journey: let me request you will make my humble cottage your inn.

Sir Char. I cannot think of waiting upon you in this trim.

Sir Sol. Oh, dear heart, your riding dress is quite sufficient.

Ele. I told you so at first. How can you be so ceremonious?

Sir Sol. We have other travellers in the same predicament with yourself. Perhaps you may be acquainted with the noble personage who now honours me with his company—perhaps you know the lord viscount Janus?

Sir Char. Intimately: I know him intimately, and

honour him very highly, as every man, who knows him, must.

Sir Sol. Truly he is a very amiable young nobleman, and I am happy to hear you report so favourably of him.

Sir Char. Sir, it is not my single voice that can do justice to Lord Janus; the whole world is loud in his praises.

Sir Sol. Mind that, daughter Eleanor.—He has a very fine fortune, I understand.

Sir Char. That is the least of his recommendations:—he has a very good heart, Sir Solomon.

Sir Sol. There again.

Sir Char. An excellent understanding.

Sir Sol. Yes, yes, he's very acute, in good truth.

Sir Char. Pardon me; I do not speak of his understanding in that style: he is much too modest and well-bred to affect the man of wit and acuteness: he is of the gentlest manners, and diffident almost to a failing.

Ele. Oh, then I assure you he has effectually got rid of that failing.

Sir Sol. Hold your tongue, child; you don't know what diffidence is.

Ele. If I am to judge of it by Lord Janus, I confess I do not.

Sir Char. I assure you it is too apt to intercept his good qualities, and keep them out of sight.

Sir Sol. Why, really, Sir Charles Freemantle, I do not see that failing in Lord Janus in the degree you mention: his lordship has a fluency of expression, a very happy command of his features, a ready address in setting himself off to advantage, as indeed it well becomes him to do; but he makes no display of his fortune; he is above that—no equipage—no suite of servants.

Sir Char. That's much indeed; for in general his lordship is very splendid in those respects.

Ele. Alas-a-day, he has nobody with him but old Philibert the Frenchman, and he looks more like a Jew than any thing else.

Sir Char. You surprise me much: I can't think where he has pick'd up such a person: I can remember he had a very smart fellow in that capacity, one Harry Singleton, a mighty favourite; but, as I had no opinion of his honesty, I always thought his reign wou'd be a short one.

Sir Sol. Well, Sir Charles, if you will honour me with your company, you will have the pleasure of meeting an old acquaintance, and confer a great favour upon a new one.

Sir Char. I must be insensible to my own happiness, cou'd I resist so much politeness. You will give me leave to ride back to my inn, and wait upon you at your hour of dinner.

Sir Sol. Use your pleasure, good Sir Charles: at the hour of four we shall expect you.

Ele. Be sure you do not fail us. A thousand, thousand thanks, and till then good bye to you.

[*Exit with* SIR SOLOMON.

Sir Char. Farewell. Who shall now tell me love at first sight is but a fable? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment.

LORD JANUS *and* POLYCARP.

Ld Jan. Then 'tis agreed to make our grand attack this very day.

Pol. By all means; there is no time to be lost. I

have cook'd up a kind of abstract for your lordship to sign, which you will pass upon Solomon for the sketch of a settlement, and on the strength of this security press him to let the marriage be consummated out of hand. I think I can answer for the old fool, if you have made your way as well with the young one.

Ld Jan. Can you doubt of that? Don't you think I make a very gallant appearance? Am I not equipt at all points like a lord?

Pol. Yes truly, you are very handsomely metamorphosed, by the help of little Moses the French Jew: I see you have him at your back, in the shape of a valet-de-chambre.

Ld Jan. Trust him for sticking close to me: he has an interest in looking well to my wardrobe, for 'tis all his own property, and he brushes every coat *con-amore* with a fellow feeling for its future good appearance in Rag Fair.

Pol. To say the truth, I have some slight traces in my memory of the very suit now upon your lordship's back.

Ld Jan. Very likely: I dare say I'm not the first lord that has worn it.

Pol. Nor the first lord's valet, perhaps, who has made free to borrow it.

Ld Jan. I know when I was in that post in Lord Janus's service, I so often wore his clothes, that I thought it for his honour to wear his name too.

Pol. 'Tis a pity but you cou'd wear his face also.

Ld Jan. Why, as he has two by his title, it wou'd be no great robbery if I did.

Pol. It must be the face that looks backwards then, for 'tis more than probable that is the way you must take your last journey out of life.

Ld Jan. No croaking, dear Jack: let me try the marriage noose first, and if that don't hold, why, a man must submit to his destiny. [*Exit.*

Pol. Aha! Madam Dorothy, are you here? May this be my destiny!

MRS DOROTHY *enters.*

Am I once more so happy? To-day my better genius is at work.

Mrs Dor. Nay, Mr Polycarp, if you are beginning again, I'll not be left alone with you.

Pol. Wherein have I offended you?

Mrs Dor. What! are you not aware that you made downright love to me last time we were together?

Pol. Do you call that love? No, madam, what my heart dictates and my tongue dares not utter, that is love.

Mrs Dor. Positively I must hear no more of it.

Pol. Is he then so formidable a deity, that the very whiff of his wings puts your spirits into a flutter?

Mrs Dor. It does indeed: My sensibility must not be awaken'd for the cruel purpose of making sport for your vanity. I suspect, Mr Polycarp, you are a general lover.

Pol. I thought you rather chided me for being too particular.

Mrs Dor. And so I did, for I have dedicated my days to celibacy and retirement: I do not wish to have the tranquillity of my heart disturb'd, and really you assail'd it so warmly, that unless you promise me to desist, I must peremptorily fly.

Pol. Don't fly; for pity's sake, don't fly.

Mrs Dor. Restrain yourself then; suppress these emotions, and I will consent to stay with you.

Pol. Any thing, most amiable of women, so you will not fly: the rigour of your commands shall condemn me to silence.

Mrs Dor. Don't call it rigour: think not I adhere so scrupulously to decorum as to forbid those delicate

attentions which are so becoming in your sex, and so pleasing to our's.

Pol. What can I say, when you tell me you have devoted your days to perpetual celibacy?

Mrs Dor. Did I tell you that? and do you always take a lady at her word on such occasions?

Pol. Thus, then, upon my knees let me adore—

OLIVER *enters hastily.*

Oliv. Oh, lud-a-mercy! I beg pardon for my boldness.

Mrs Dor. Impertinent fellow!

Oliv. As I'm a sinful man, I did not know the gentleman was at his prayers. Good sir, go on with your devotions.

Mrs Dor. How often must you be told not to burst into a lady's room in such a manner? Why didn't you tap at the door before you enter'd?

Oliv. Dear heart, why didn't you bolt it, and then I cou'd not have enter'd at all?

Mrs Dor. What is your business here?

Oliv. Only to tell you his worship desires to see you; but I will go back and say you are a little busy at present.

Pol. Come, come, honest Oliver, you seem a man of more discretion than to say any thing about the matter: you know the servant's proverb,—He that keeps a secret makes a friend.

Oliv. Oh, as for that, let me alone for a secret: Madam Dorothy knows well enough what I can do in that way.

Mrs Dor. Well, well, go and tell your master I am coming: say nothing of Mr Polycarp's being with me.

Oliv. No, no, there is nobody with you; you are quite alone:—but I hope the gentleman can remember to turn back to the place he left off at. [*Exit.*

Mrs Dor. You see what you expose me to. I desire, sir, you will leave me.

Pol. Tell me only when I may be so blest again: where shall we meet?

Mrs Dor. Why will you be so pressing? Can't I take my usual walk in the lime-tree grove, without your following me?

Pol. Certainly not, and love, though blind, shall conduct me to the place. Groves are propitious to the lover's hopes: there you will listen to my vows; there I shall not kneel in vain; there, in my fancy, I behold you soften'd by my supplication, pitying, relenting, yielding—

Mrs Dor. Oh lud! don't talk of yielding: I wonder what you see in me to encourage these raptures.

Pol. What do I see? The majesty of Juno, when you move; the wisdom of Minerva, when you speak; in your eyes the smile of Venus, and about your lips a thousand playful Cupids, which I will seize upon the spot, and crush the little wanton rascals—thus and thus——

SIR SOLOMON *enters.*

Sir Sol. Mr Polycarp!

Mrs Dor. Ah, murder!

Sir Sol. Release those little wanton Cupids, and let me have a word with 'em before you crush 'em quite to death.

Pol. Very good, very good, Sir Solomon! Very pleasant, i'faith!

Sir Sol. Yes, indeed, so it should seem: Cousin Dorothy, I hope you like it.

Mrs Dor. Pooh! don't be foolish: 'Tis none of my doing. Isn't there a wedding going forward in the family?

Sir Sol. I shou'd suppose so, as I see you have put it into rehearsal.

Mrs Dor. The gentleman was only giving me joy.

Sir Sol. And you was only taking it.

Pol. If it is at all improper for the friends of the contracting parties to welcome such good tidings with a salute, it was my joy upon the occasion that overpower'd me.

Sir Sol. And wasn't you overpowered too, cousin? But, pr'ythee, now run to daughter Eleanor; she has had a fall.

Mrs Dor. A fall! Oh heavens!

Sir Sol. Don't be alarmed; she's not hurt: a gentleman luckily stept in upon the moment, and saved her: it might have been your case, if I had not stept in as luckily just now.

Mrs Dor. Ridiculous! provoking! [*Exit.*

Sir Sol. Mr Polycarp.

Pol. Sir Solomon.

Sir Sol. When I parted from you, to go in search of my daughter, I left you in the library, engaged with a book: if I mistake not, you was turning over a page of Tully's Offices.

Pol. Nothing more likely: I believe it was that very book.

Sir Sol. And if it is not impertinent, which of his four cardinal virtues might you be engaged with, whilst you was turning over a page with Cousin Dorothy?

Pol. 'Twou'd be harder to tell you which of the virtues I was not engaged with, when I had the whole volume in my hands.

Sir Sol. It is a volume, let me tell you, that has lain a pretty many years on the shelf, and you will find a pretty many crabbed pages in it.

Pol. Beauty, Sir Solomon, is the fairest page in the manuscript of the creation: a scholar seeks for what he may admire in it; a booby looks about for

what he may find fault with; one feeds like a bee upon blossoms, the other like a beetle upon dirt.

Sir Sol. Under favour, I conceive my cousin is not very beautiful, nor yet very young.

Pol. Certainly she is neither, and yet there is a something; give me leave to say, a kind of *je ne sçais quoi* about her.

Sir Sol. Perhaps you mean her fortune: there, indeed, she has some temptations.

Pol. Not for me, not for me: I despise fortune; riches are my contempt; therefore, with your leave, we will drop the subject, and apply to something more immediate. You must know, Sir Solomon, I have sketch'd out an abstract of his lordship's proposed settlement upon your daughter.

Sir Sol. That's well done, Mr Polycarp; that is very much to the purpose.

Pol. 'Tis noble, 'tis magnificent; perhaps I thought it so in the extreme, but I acted from duty, he from generosity, and so it stands without retrenchment.

Sir Sol. My deposit with my daughter is 20,000*l.* in hand, and the residue at my death without heirs.

Pol. I know it is, and shall be glad to see the transaction closed between his lordship and you.

Sir Sol. Have you any doubt then of his standing to his engagement?

Pol. Far be it from me to say that, but I have seen one marriage settlement broke off from the dilatory proceedings of the lawyers. Lord Janus is a young man; his passions are warm, and 'tis the nature of such tempers to be a little volatile. Were I in your case, I shou'd not let him out of my sight; I should marry him on the spot.

Sir Sol. How can that be done with security to the parties?

Pol. Very easily. Let him sign the abstract I have prepared, which effectually binds him to the settlement, and pay you the 20,000*l.* into his hands, and

the affair is done: The marriage takes place immediately, and your daughter is the lady viscountess Janus.

Sir Sol. And are you sure his lordship's signing that abstract is good security for the settlement?

Pol. I am sure it is as good as any settlement he can make, or any security you can have, though his whole estate were bound to make it good. I am your friend, Sir Solomon, in this business; I am indeed.

Sir Sol. My dear Mr Polycarp, I am everlastingly bound to you.—My money is forthcoming, if he is but as ready on his part.

Pol. Oh! I will be answerable for him. But how stand the young lady's inclinations all this while?

Sir Sol. And how shou'd you suppose a young lady's inclinations likely to stand, from the sample you have had in this family of an old one's?

Pol. Ah, Sir Solomon, you're a wag. No more of that, if you love me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

SIR SOLOMON SAPIENT, LORD JANUS, POLYCARP.

Sir Sol. Well, my lord Janus, these are very generous proposals; I cannot hesitate about them; I

only doubt if Janus Castle will not be too expensive an establishment for a jointure house.

Ld Jan. 'Tis a substantial edifice, and in good repair; I can't complain of my expences in keeping it up.

Pol. I shou'd wonder if you did. [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. I have heard much of its magnificence, and I confess my expectations run very high.

Pol. Your disappointment will soon overtake 'em. [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. But it is not the splendour of your lordship's alliance which dazzles my ambition; 'tis from the virtue of your character I derive my felicity.

Pol. You hear that, my lord:—little does Sir Solomon value your nobility, birth, and fortune—and indeed what are they?

Ld Jan. Ay, what, indeed?

Sir Sol. I don't say that, my lord: I would not be thought to undervalue worldly enjoyments, nor outward appearances; but I look into the interior of a man; I study the character; that is my habit.

Pol. A gift, Sir Solomon, a gift!

Sir Sol. It is so, Mr Polycarp, it is so.—And now, my lord Janus, as we have put the business so far in train, I presume I may account myself secure of the honour of calling you my son-in-law.

Ld Jan. Honour, my good Sir Solomon, is the very oath and bond of a peer: I must forfeit my title before I can falsify my word.

Pol. I rather think you'll do both at the same time. [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. Now then I may announce my happiness, and open my doors to my friends and neighbours.—A propos to that, my lord, I chanced upon a friend of your's this morning; a gentleman I am under great obligations to for rescuing my daughter from her danger; a very warm admirer of your lordship, I can assure you; one who speaks of you in raptures.

Ld Jan. Ay, indeed! Who may he be?

Sir Sol. Sir Charles Freemantle.

Ld Jan. The devil it is! Sir Charles Freemantle!—Polycarp, I'm in an ague fit. [*Aside to* POL.

Sir Sol. Bless me, Lord Janus! what is the matter? You seem startled.

Pol. What are you about? Recollect yourself. [*Apart to* LORD JANUS.] 'Tis his sensibility on the lady's account throws him into these terrors.

Ld Jan. Polycarp can witness what a shock it gave me.

Pol. Yes, indeed, he has not recover'd himself yet.

Sir Sol. And therefore to Sir Charles Freemantle, who was the lucky instrument of saving her, we owe the more. I thought I could not do a more acceptable thing to your lordship than give you an opportunity of telling him so. He dines with us to-day.

Ld Jan. Indeed!

Sir Sol. Oh yes: I took upon me to say you would be happy to see him at dinner.

Ld Jan. You said so, did you? You made use of my name to him?

Sir Sol. I did, I did, my lord. I said every thing in your name that was civil.

Ld Jan. I am obliged to you.—Mr Polycarp, you will return me that settlement; 'tis of no present use; I can do no business to-day.

Sir Sol. How so, how so? What's the matter, I beseech you?

Ld Jan. 'Tis impossible to think of it: all my joys are frustrated; disappointment blasts my ardour: this day, this very day, and none other, had I set down for the consummation of my happiness: love fired my heart; generosity expanded it: the deed was ready, the very pen was in my fingers, that was to

portion my bride, when suddenly my evil genius steps in, and the vision vanishes into air.

[*Walks about disorder'd.*

Pol. I told you how it would be: I warn'd you of the turn he wou'd take: he'll be off; he will, upon my soul—If not, I can answer for one that will.

[*Aside.*

Sir Sol. What do you tell me? Off! Will he be off? Sure you are not in earnest.

Ld Jan. Sir Charles Freemantle is a person I cannot be in company with.

Pol. No, indeed, your lordship and Sir Charles must not meet—at least I will not be present at the interview.

Sir Sol. Why, what can all this mean? If there is truth in man, I never heard one gentleman speak of another in more kind and friendly terms.

OLIVER *enters.*

Oliv. An please your worship, Sir Charles Freemantle is arrived.

Sir Sol. There, there, there! What's to be done now?

Oliv. Where would you please to have him shewn?

Ld Jan. Not into this room, for your life.

Sir Sol. Hold, hold! Who's in the drawing-room?

Oliv. Nobody but miss.

Sir Sol. Shew him in there: say that I will come to him presently.

Oliv. What the murrain ails 'em now? Ah, my poor master, thou hast stuff'd thy skull so full of my lord, that thou hast turn'd out thy wits to make room for him. [*Exit.*

Sir Sol. My lord Janus, I am quite confounded at what has happen'd. I had no intention of inviting any person disagreeable to your lordship; but what am I to do, now the gentleman is in my house?

Ld Jan. Get him out of it as speedily as you can, Sir Solomon, if my longer stay in it is of any consequence to you.

Sir Sol. Upon what pretence shall I turn him thus abruptly out of my house? Has he any design upon your lordship? Is he unfit company for a gentleman? Is he other than he pretends to be—a cheat, an impostor?

Ld Jan. He has been pleased to describe my character to you in very handsome terms: I shall not speak of his: I shall say no more of Sir Charles Freemantle, than that I know him only too well, and that if he is to be admitted into your house, I must positively quit it.

Pol. I can only assure you, Sir Solomon, that his lordship has the best reasons in the world for what he says. A person of Lord Janus's character will be very properly delicate about entering into particulars; you must not expect it from him; but if you set any value upon his alliance, I can tell you it is no otherwise to be obtained but by dismissing your visitor.

Sir Sol. No doubt, no doubt, I will, Mr Polycarp—but how?

Pol. Nothing so easy; 'tis done every day—A civil apology on the score of health, or business, or sudden engagement—any thing of the sort will serve for an excuse to get rid of an unwelcome guest.

Sir Sol. Very true; I'll instantly set about it; and if I can find brother George, I'll send him upon the errand. [*Exit.*

Pol. Lord Janus, I am your lordship's obedient: I shall move off, whilst my legs are at liberty.

Ld Jan. How now, my master! Where am I to be, if you take the bitt in your teeth and are off?

Pol. And where shall I be, when your sham lordship is detected and blown up?

Ld Jan. I'll tell you what, Jack, I am such a friend to good fellowship, that if it were only to enjoy the

ceremonials of a horse-pond, I should be glad to have you with me. How shall I support my melancholy meditations in the stocks, unless I have the consolation of seeing you fast lock'd by my side?

Pol. I am obliged to you: you have a pleasant, easy way of providing for your friends. In the name of folly, why did I, a novice in iniquity, join stock with one of so establish'd a fame, that even in this odd corner of the island we can't enjoy a little seasonable obscurity?

Ld Jar. Come, come, I have more resources than you dream of.

Pol. Methinks you were cruelly puzzled to turn to them: I never saw a fellow in a worse plunge, and had not I help'd you out, I know not what wou'd have become of you.

Ld Jan. Well, well, let us retire to my chamber, and keep out of sight till Sir Charles is gone, and then we shall have a clear field for action. Come along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

SIR CHARLES FREEMANTLE, *followed by* ELEANOR.

Ele. Where are you going? What is it that disturbs you? Are you afraid of being left alone with me till my father comes?

Sir Char. I am indeed: every moment grows more painful than another.

Ele. Why? What have I said or done to give you pain?

Sir Char. Come, come, you know the nature of the pain you give me.

Ele. I know I am very little qualified to entertain you, but I can answer from my heart, that I never meant to offend you.

Sir Char. Offend me! No. Must I then plainly tell you, that you are too charming, and I too sensible to your charms?

Ele. Nay, if you run away from me only because you like me, I must suppose it is for instruction sake, to teach me what I ought to do towards you.

Sir Char. This is cruel kindness, for you are flattering my passion when you should be assisting me to fly from it. You may now return the little service I have done you. We have changed situations since the morning: I am now in the danger; reach out your hand, and save me.

Ele. Here is my hand. What can I offer more? Take it.

Sir Char. Can I take the property of another? Can I defraud a friend?

Ele. Ah! now I understand your scruples: You suppose my father has engaged me to Lord Janus?

Sir Char. 'Tis true; and as I love the man, and know his merit, I cannot think of interfering with pretensions, not only prior, but superior to my own.

Ele. Very well, I see what you point at. You told me I was to keep no secrets from my father: I am to have no preference, no choice nor will of my own. What if I don't like Lord Janus; am I to be forced to marry him against my inclinations?

Sir Char. How shall I answer that question, and not appear like a seducer? Let your own heart answer it. If you do not like Lord Janus, I can only say the most admired young man in the kingdom is not to your taste.

Ele. Indeed he is not, and I could be glad you would tell me for which of his lordship's superior good qualities I ought to hold him in such admiration.

Sir Char. That would be a little too hard upon

me. I will do him justice as a man of honour, but I will not undertake his cause as an advocate.

Ele. And did you do him justice a while ago, when you told us he was diffident almost to a failing? There I think I may venture to defend his character, though I am as little inclined to be his advocate as you can be. You told us at the same time he had a good heart and an excellent understanding—'tis a pity such perfection should be lost upon me. You said that he was modest, well bred, and of the gentlest manners—these are charming qualities: convince me only that his lordship possesses them, and I cannot chuse but admire him.

Sir Char. Fie upon you, lovely, but bewitching tempter! you have rifled me of my heart, and now you wou'd rally me out of my reason; but I'll not be entrapp'd into any such undertaking as you propose: I shall leave Lord Janus to his own defence.

Ele. Nay, but stay a moment, and hear how easily it is done: stand only in that place for your friend, and see how instantly you will make a convert of me; nay, but keep your post; for now I acknowledge all the virtues you have ascribed to him; now I contemplate every thing, which I regard as worthy to be admired and loved.

Sir Char. Oh heaven and earth! what transports I shou'd now enjoy, if I dared but to indulge them; but I must escape with honour whilst I can.

Ele. So you will go. Ah! then I see my error, and diffidence is indeed the failing you described.

CAPTAIN GEORGE *enters to them.*

Capt. Geo. Sir Charles Freemantle, I must beg leave to introduce myself to you as the uncle of this young lady, and as such to assure you I shall ever retain a grateful sense of the very important service you rendered her this morning.

Sir Char. The interest you take in that happy

event, captain, makes it doubly pleasing to me; for I hope I am too good an Englishman not to reverence the character of so brave an officer as I have now the honour to take by the hand.

Capt. Geo. Alas, sir, my small services merit no such encomiums—but, Sir Charles, I have a few words in commission from my brother, and, with my niece's leave, I would deliver them to you in private.

Ele. Very well, uncle George, I will do as you bid me; I will go and leave you to yourselves—but I am sorry it must be a secret, because I am sure if you had any thing to say that wou'd make me happy, you wou'd not send me out of the way.

[*Exit* ELEANOR.

Capt. Geo. If I understood my niece rightly, Sir Charles, you have discovered the situation of things in this family, and are doing that from your own delicacy, which would else seem a breach of hospitality to suggest to you.

Sir Char. 'Tis very true, sir. I apprehend there is business going forward in this family that wou'd make my company very unseasonable, and if I am right in my conjecture, why shou'd I put you to the pain of an apology?

Capt. Geo. Upon my word, Sir Charles, you have candidly excused me from the most awkward service I was ever engaged in. The truth is, my brother and Lord Janus are just now very seriously employed: his lordship's lawyer is come from town for the purpose; and I understand the affair to be of such a nature, as not to allow of those attentions which, in any other circumstances, they would be proud to pay you.

Sir Char. I certainly shall not think of interrupting any parties so engaged; but I flatter myself that, to a gentleman of your character, I may speak openly and ingenuously what occurs to me on this occasion.

Capt. Geo. By all means, sir; use no reserve with me.

Sir Char. Then I must say to you, in confidence, that I suspect my friend Lord Janus will meet more difficulties than he seems to be aware of; and I am persuaded he is the last man living to press forward a treaty with the lady's father, unless he thought himself secure of her affections.

Capt. Geo. It may be so; but these are matters out of my line, which I never meddle in. I love my niece, and wish to see her happy, but I have no voice in the disposal of her, nor am I in the secret of her inclinations.

Sir Char. Misunderstand me not, I pray you. I am not sounding you on the subject of her inclinations; I am only guarding against those consequences which may ensue upon the presumption of Lord Janus's disappointment. I know him well: a nobler gentleman does not live, nor is there a family in the kingdom but might well be proud of his alliance.

Capt. Geo. This is a very honourable testimony on your part, Sir Charles.

Sir Char. It is but justice; and if a certain accident, which happen'd this morning, may have left impressions on your niece's mind in favour of an object whose pretensions cannot vie with those of Lord Janus, it becomes a very serious point with me to clear myself from all suspicion of such mean, clandestine measures, as one competitor will sometimes enviously practise, to degrade and level his superior. As Lord Janus is my particular friend, I must therefore insist upon an interview with him before I leave the place.

Capt. Geo. I commend you for your caution, and 'tis what you have a right to expect; but as he is now in the very act of signing and sealing with my brother, I think you will not press for it immediately,

nor perhaps consider this house as the properest place for your meeting.

Sir Char. I would not wish to remain in this house, where my longer stay might subject me to suspicions I have already made some sacrifices to avoid; I had rather meet Lord Janus any where else.

Capt. Geo. Didn't you notice a little rustic building in the wood, as you came down the avenue to the house?

Sir Char. I did; there cannot be a fitter rendezvous; I'll order my chaise to follow me, and beg you to tell Lord Janus I will wait for him there.

Capt. Geo. I will certainly do it, and shall hold myself bound on all occasions to bear witness to your very honourable proceedings.

Sir Char. I cannot wish a better advocate. Good day to you! [*Exit.*

ELEANOR *enters.*

Ele. Uncle George!

Capt. Geo. Well, my dear, what say you?

Ele. So you're alone, I find: your visitor is gone: heigho! we have seen the last of him.

Capt. Geo. Are you particularly concern'd for that?

Ele. I'll put a case to you in your own way, and then you shall judge if I have not reason to be concern'd—but you'll answer fairly?

Capt. Geo. To be sure I will; let me hear your case, my pretty Eleanor.

Ele. Why suppose now your ship had struck upon a rock, and you and it were perishing in the waves, and suppose a gallant generous fellow was in that very moment of distress to save your life at the risque of his own—shou'dn't you be very much obliged to him?

Capt. Geo. Undoubtedly I should; what then?

Ele. Why then how can you wonder if what would be obligation in your case should be love in mine?

Capt. Geo. Ah, you subtle hussy! I must not be entangled by you in this manner.

Ele. But is he not a noble fellow?

Capt Geo. Well, well! put no leading questions to me: I'm not a match for you.

Ele. I hope you don't compare my lord to him for person.

Capt. Geo. I am no critic in men's persons.

Ele. No, no; I dare say you look to the good qualities of a man; to his courage, to his honesty, for instance.

Capt. Geo. Well, child, and is not honesty a recommendation in every man's character?

Ele. Oh, yes, if he was an attorney, a very great one; but let me ask you, uncle George—was you ever in love?

Capt. Geo. Go, you idle thing you, what a question's that!

Ele. Did you ever fall in love with a girl, who had nothing else to recommend her but her honesty? Not you. Love himself is a thief, you know; and let Sir Charles say what fine things he will of Lord Janus, he only sets himself in a better light with me, and throws his friend to a further distance.

Capt. Geo. Come, come, this is mere raillery and idle talking; I flatter myself you don't intend to disappoint your father's wishes by refusing the great match he has provided for you.

Ele. And if I did, cou'dn't I supply the place of it with one as good? I am not over-ambitious of a great title; a baronet's lady will serve my turn.

Capt. Geo. You cannot doubt Lord Janus's merit, when his very rival speaks so highly of him.

Ele. Oh dear heart! Lord Janus may have all the merit in the world, and yet my Lady Janus be a very miserable woman. But tell me what you have

done with Sir Charles, and where you have disposed of him? I hope he's coming here again?

Capt. Geo. That can hardly be expected.

Ele. Will he go without speaking to Lord Janus?

Capt. Geo. Perhaps not; they may converse together, and yet not make this house their place of meeting: and this reminds me that I have a message in charge, which I must make haste and deliver. Adieu! [*Exit.*

Enter LORD JANUS *to* ELEANOR.

Ld Jan. Fairest object in nature, how blest am I in being privileged to address you as your betroth'd admirer! Your worthy father has admitted me to an alliance, which will add a lustre to the brightest honours of my family, and I wait the approaching moment, that is to make us one, with an ardour nothing but the warmest passion can inspire.

Ele. As my father has assured your lordship of my compliance, I hope he can answer for my happiness too.

Ld Jan. Oh, my angel! when I have the rapturous delight to call you mine, you will only have to command, and be obeyed; to wish, and to be gratified in all you wish: for my fortune, I'll not speak of it; all is your's, I possess nothing: for my title, think it only borrowed to adorn you; I shall covet no other honour but that of being the most favour'd of your slaves.

Ele. Be assured, my lord, my endeavours shall not be wanting to set you at liberty.

Ld Jan. If you see me here a private man, unfurnished, unattended, 'tis that I may dazzle you the more when I present you to the admiring world one gem of lustre, splendid as your own brilliant charms; equipage, attendants, pleasures, palaces, are at your feet, and court you to enjoy them.

Ele. Indeed! I protest this is a very amusing in-

ventory, and shews how well you understand to chuse out playthings for a child.

Ld Jan. Foregad! I must change my attack; this will never do. [*Aside.*

Ele. Pray go on, for as yet there is no one thing in your catalogue I wish to bid for, not an article for which I would barter the freedom of my condition, and sacrifice the affections of my heart.

Ld Jan. She has fairly put me down; I have not a word to say for myself. [*Aside.*

Ele. Believe me, Lord Janus, you have made a small mistake in supposing I am to fall in love with the world by description: when I enter upon it, I hope to take a friend for my guide, whom I can love and trust; one who will teach me rather how to shun its temptations than be himself the tempter: as your lordship therefore has only paid your addresses to my vanity, my vanity is very much at your service: my heart I shall otherwise dispose of.

Ld Jan. Now for my last effort.—Most charming of your sex, it is your heart I aspire to; it is that heavenly grace, those killing eyes, that lovely form—Oh! let me clasp it in my longing arms!

[*Offers to embrace her.*

Ele. Stand off! Are you the elegant, the accomplished Lord Janus, whom your friend Sir Charles describes in raptures?

Ld Jan. No truly I am not. [*Aside.*

Ele. The modest, well-bred, gentle peer, whose diffidence is his only failing?—I'll not believe it.

Ld Jan. Upon my soul you are much in the right of it. [*Aside.*]—O generous beauty, pardon this extravagance of my passion; its raptures overpower'd me: how shall I atone for this involuntary offence?

Ele. I'll tell you how, my lord—Go to your friend Sir Charles Freemantle; find him out, and either convince him that he has mistaken you, or, by copying

his manners, learn to make yourself more acceptable to me. [*Exit.*

Ld Jan. 'Tis all up with me: I can act the lord, but I cannot counterfeit the lover: this pedlar's courtship has undone me; I must ev'n give it in, strip off this fool's jacket, and decamp. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

LORD JANUS *and* POLYCARP *meet.*

Pol. Hey-day! what's in the wind now? you have slipt your skin.

Ld Jan. And in good time, or it had been too hot to hold me.

Pol. But what's the matter after all?

Ld Jan. This girl won't hear reason, and I can't make love! that confounded Sir Charles Freemantle is still lurking about.

Pol. What then?

Ld Jan. Why then I must either clear the ground of him, or he of me: I am going to meet him.

Pol. Are you mad?

Ld Jan. Completely so, with him, with her, with fortune, all the world—I am at my last prayers.

Pol. Your first I rather think, if at any.

Ld Jan. The fellow stipulates for an interview; he is waiting for me at the rendezvous in the wood; these people insist upon my seeing him; the captain was charged with a message to me; Sir Solomon still engages for his daughter, if I can drive this lurking lover out of her way.

Pol. And do you undertake for that?

Ld Jan. You see I am arm'd for the attempt; prepared either for engagement or retreat.

Pol. Explain yourself.

Ld Jan. Can't you comprehend that in this undress I am Harry Singleton, and Lord Janus's valet de chambre, a character I am more perfect in than that of his lordship? Well then—I make up a story for the purpose; nobody is present at our meeting, and as he does not know I have quitted my service, he believes what I tell him, and I bolt him.

Pol. Do you so of a certain? Suppose he will not be bolted?

Ld Jan. Then I know who will.

Pol. And what's to be done with me?

Ld Jan. You must shift for yourself.

Pol. Is that your care of me?

Ld Jan. Nay, man, don't be angry: you have still a good game in hand, if Dorothy's eyes tell truth; follow up your fortune there; when I am gone, the field will be open; Sir Solomon will be outrageous against his daughter, and caress you in hopes of making up matters with me: All this you can manage to your own purposes.

Pol. Well, well, I own this carries some face! Dorothy is no small prize either in bulk or ballast; she's full of ingots.

Ld Jan. Now then, Jack, give me your hand, perhaps for the last time: Do we part friends?

Pol. Cordially.

Ld Jan. Then fare thee well, my hearty fellow, if

so it shall be! And may that slippery slut Fortune, though she jilts me, prove staunch to thee; therefore, as thou wou'd'st have shared in my success, had it pleased her infernal divinity to grant it, so let me participate in thine, if in her celestial graces she shall smile upon thee.

Pol. Then here's my hand! and with it my promise, that if ever this same hand takes possession of Dame Dorothy's strong box, there shall be a nest-egg left at the bottom for an unlucky friend to brood upon.

Ld Jan. That's honest, and I thank thee.

Pol. And now, as we are upon parting, I'll give thee a proof, that, though I have not known thee long, I know thee well. Thou hast every quality of a gentleman about thee, but the principles of one; birth, that shou'd not have been disgraced; education, that ought not to have been abused; and talents, which it is a scandal to pervert; had you applied them as you ought, instead of sinking into the menial drudgery of service, you might have raised yourself to a level with that station, which you so treacherously counterfeit.

Ld Jan. The devil himself will turn moralist, if you begin a preaching; therefore no more, but betake yourself to your Dorothy; if my string fails, I shall away to the next inn, there consign myself to the basket of some charitable stage, where I shall sit like the real Janus, with a melancholy face looking backwards on the world, and meditating on the quick transitions of all human grandeur. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR SOLOMON *to* POLYCARP.

Sir Sol. Didn't I see Lord Janus leave the room just now?

Pol. Yes, and I'm afraid he will leave the house before long; he does not find that promising return

of affection in your daughter, of which you spoke so confidently; she seems very cold to his addresses.

Sir Sol. A good token, Mr Polycarp, a special good token; 'tis a way she has; it runs in her family: when I courted her mother, she was for all the world like Eleanor; you would have sworn she cou'd not bear the sight of me; she would run away and hide herself, if she did but hear the very sound of my foot.

Pol. Ay indeed! that's much.

Sir Sol. I tell you truth, she would wring her hands, and cry, and take on at such a rate, if I offered to make suit to her.

Pol. Some people would have taken that for aversion.

Sir Sol. They would so, they would so; but I knew better, I knew the ways of women, and that a tear upon the cheek is no more a sign of sorrow than a mole upon the skin—Lord love you! there was more blubbering at my wedding than ever was bestowed upon a funeral.

Pol. Than you perhaps bestowed upon her ladyship's—but I hope you made her happy whilst you lived together.

Sir Sol. Happy, Mr Polycarp! I made her amazingly happy; happy to a proverb: we were call'd The Turtles: maiden tears are as sure a prelude to married happiness, as spring showers to summer fruits—and so my lord will find—but your servant; I have no time to spare; I shall go and give my miss a lecture: Mr Polycarp, your servant—Look, look! here comes cousin Dorothy—Hands off there, if you love me.

Pol. Oh fie, Sir Solomon! don't suspect me—Go, go! bring your daughter to a proper way of thinking, and I'll take care of your cousin.

[*Exit* SIR SOLOMON.

Enter MRS DOROTHY *to* MR POLYCARP.

Oh heavens, she comes, and smiling comes—
Love in her eyes sits playing, and sheds delicious death.

Mrs Dor. Nonsense! there will be anger in my eyes, if you persist to flatter me: you know I hate flattery; I can't bear raptures; teach 'em to your lord; he may address them to a younger and a fairer object.

Pol. Let him, if he prefers the rising to the meridian sun: let him worship the pale quivering beam, that faintly glimmers in the twilight of the morn; let me enjoy the vertical full blaze, a glowing canopy of warmth and splendour.

Mrs Dor. Raptures again! you men of genius deal in nothing else; but are they lasting, are they true?

Pol. Ovid was not a truer votary to love than I.

Mrs Dor. Ay, you are a scholar; there's another danger; I should be jealous even of your books; grant I had nothing to fear from living rivals, how should I be secured from dead ones?

Pol. Then welcome, beauty, and adieu to books! we will consign them all to oblivion but one; and that I will reserve for you alone.

Mrs Dor. Indeed! and which is that?

Pol. The Manual of Love; none but a scholar can develope the sublime philosophy of the tender passion.

Mrs Dor. Passion and philosophy! how do they agree? I thought there had been no philosophy in love.

Pol. Pardon me; how else should I keep my passion within bounds, how support life itself without possessing that for which alone I live?

Mrs Dor. A true lover will live a long while upon hope.

Pol. Then it must not be that meagre moonshine diet, which poor Lord Janus is fed with; it must not be that mawkish greensick hope that tantalizes his appetite: a few hours perhaps, a day or two at most, I can live upon it; but fix a certain time, an early moment for my happiness, or expect to see me pine away into an atrophy.

Mrs Dor. Well then perhaps—but take notice, I'll not be hurried—perhaps I may consent to give you hopes, if I find you in the same mind a twelvemonth hence.

Pol. Twelve months, my charmer! do you take me for a patriarch? twelve days would be an insupportable period.

Mrs Dor. Oh frightful! what would the world say were I to take so rash a step?

Pol. To-morrow let it be; nay, why not this very day?

Mrs Dor. Bless me, this very day! you hurry me out of my life.

Pol. No, loveliest of women, I would rather hurry you into your happiness; let this languid couple crawl their own dreaming pace, but let us fly to the goal, and seize the prize before them. Give me your hand; remember you promised me a walk in the grove; there we may converse at our ease and secure from interruption: Come! I have much to say to you, and many arguments to move you to compliance.

Mrs Dor. Well then I'll go, upon condition you refrain from raptures.

Pol. I'll do my best to obey you; but if my passion breaks bounds, recollect your own maxim, That there is no philosophy in love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Grove.

LORD JANUS *enters, alone.*

O Fortune, if thou art indeed a goddess, prove thyself a good-natured one by taking pity on a poor fellow at a hard pinch, who is one of thy broken retainers, and would fain make it up with thee, for all the foul tricks thou hast play'd me in time past, and the many thousand curses I have bestow'd upon thee in return. Now, now stand my friend, for here comes my man.

SIR CHARLES FREEMANTLE *enters.*

Sir Char. Harry Singleton!

Ld Jan. The same, at your honour's service.

Sir Char. You live with Lord Janus still?

Ld Jan. My lord is much too good a master for me to quit, and too easily pleased with my poor services to dismiss me.

Sir Char. And is he coming? Does he know I am waiting for him?

Ld Jan. He knows it full well; the captain deliver'd your message, and these are the words I have in charge to say to you—"Go to Sir Charles Freemantle," says he, "and tell him that I feel all possible gratitude for the handsome things he has said of me to the lady of my heart, and for his very honourable conduct in forbearing to pursue the advantages, which a lucky rencontre with that lady this morning seem'd to have given him."

Sir Char. I am very glad his lordship saw my conduct in that light: Go on.

Ld Jan. —"Tell him," says he, "that I am now happy enough to have conquered the impressions, which that accident seem'd to make, and find myself perfectly reinstated in the good graces of my charmer; that she has consented to make me happy, and we are now settling the deeds and appointing the day for our nuptials."

Sir Char. You surprise me; is it possible?

Ld Jan. Even so, upon my veracity.

Sir Char. I never could have suspected it.

Ld Jan. Why not, sir? Perhaps you do not know the lady.

Sir Char. It seems I do not: If this be so, she must be the arrantest coquette in nature.

Ld Jan. Oh, dear sir, woe betide the man that marries her! Nobody can tell the pains I have taken with my lord to draw him off, but it was his fate, and you may bless your stars, Sir Charles, for the escape you have had.

Sir Char. By my soul, Harry, I begin to think so.

Ld Jan. With great reason, let me assure you.

Sir Char. Damnation! but it vexes me to have been so deceived in a girl of her sort, a child, a mere baby, all nature and simplicity as it seem'd.

Ld Jan. Very true, Sir Charles, but all men are liable to be deceived—I hope you at least will not prove an exception.

Sir Char. Let me perish but it were a friendly act to open his eyes; I'll go to Lord Janus, and demand an interview.

Ld Jan. No, no, sir, I beseech you not to think of that.

Sir Char. Why not? 'tis due to honour, friendship, justice; shall I see my friend upon the brink of ruin, and not rouse him to a sense of his danger?

Ld Jan. Alas-a-day, sir, I have done all that over

and over again, but it is too late; it is impossible to prevent it; nay, if it were possible, give me leave to say it were improper to prevent it.

Sir Char. How so? how can it be improper?

Ld Jan. Because—but I beg your pardon, sir, I ought not to reveal secrets.

Sir Char. What is it you mean? explain yourself.

Ld Jan. Good sir, don't compel me to do that: it is not fit to be explain'd: you have had an escape, that is enough; believe me, Sir Charles Freemantle, you have had an escape.

Sir Char. Has my lord taken earnest of her favours? is she a wanton?

Ld Jan. It does not become me to say what she is; 'tis an affair of honour, Sir Charles; you will interpret for yourself: you now see the reason why my lord declined a meeting with you; he cannot enter into explanations with you; you cannot wish to enter into rivalship with him; you have a happy riddance, and no doubt will slip your cable and be off.

Sir Char. Off! to be sure I will—Would to heaven he could be off too!

Ld Jan. Honour, Sir Charles, honour.

Sir Char. 'Sblood, man, what tell you me of honour? 'tis ruin, misery, and inevitable disgrace.

Ld Jan. I hope, Sir Charles, you will consider a poor servant, and not betray me.

Sir Char. Pr'ythee don't suspect me for a tatler; that is not my character: If I could render him any service I would, but that being impossible, step back to your lord, and tell him that I leave him my good wishes, and am hurrying out of the country as fast as my horses can carry me.

Ld Jan. I'll be sure to give him your very words—Any further commands, Sir Charles?

Sir Char. Stay! let me reflect—If you have an opportunity of speaking privately to the lady—but no matter; let that pass: deliver what I told you.

Ld Jan. To a syllable—(Oh! you are a precious gull!) A good journey to your honour; I see your chaise is waiting—I heartily wish your honour all health and happiness and a pleasant tour.

Sir Char. Enough, enough. Good bye to you.

Ld Jan. I humbly take my leave—A fair wind to your small cargo of wits!—Fortune, I acquit thee! [*Exit.*

SIR CHARLES, *alone.*

How I have been deceived in this young hypocrite! A more artless, innocent creature I thought I had never seen—The hussy to throw out her allurements to me—Poor Janus, how I pity thee! She would have made me believe he was her aversion: the world, it must be own'd, corrupts some women; this woman is born for retaliation, and will corrupt the world—But, as I live, here she comes!—Oh, thou deluding mischief!—how like an innocent she looks—So, so, she pretends not to see me: pretty affectation!—now for a sham start, an engaging flutter—(*During this latter part,* ELEANOR *enters deep in thought.*) Meditating, fair lady?

Ele. Ah! Sir Charles Freemantle!

Sir Char. Marriage is a copious subject for reflection, especially in your case, where it promises so many delights.

Ele. So many! which are they?

Sir Char. In the first place, novelty, which you'll allow is a very delightful thing, in the next variety, more delightful still, pleasures in abundance, admirers without numbers, coquetry without bounds—

Ele. Oh fie upon you! you give a worse picture of matrimony than Lord Janus himself did.

Sir Char. How did he describe it to you? logically or experimentally?

Ele. I don't know what you mean by that.

Sir Char. By words or by actions?

Ele. By both; but his words were so foolish, and his actions so impertinent, that he fairly put me out of conceit with it, and I determined to have nothing more to say to him.

Sir Char. You dismiss'd him upon proof—?

Ele. I did.

Sir Char. Upon my word, young madam, you have a most happy assurance. [*Aside.*

Ele. By the same token I have a quarrel with you for giving him a character to me, which he in no one respect deserves: you told me he was modest, sensible, polite, diffident to a fault—I find him vain, ridiculous, ill-bred, and forward in the extreme.

Sir Char. And do you quarrel with him for such trifles?

Ele. Trifles do you call them? Sure, Sir Charles, you change your language with me.

Sir Char. Ought I not to call them trifles, when, in the first place, I do not admit them to exist in my friend? in the next place, when I am convinced that, whether they exist or not, you are determined upon marrying him, and that immediately?

Ele. And who has given you this convincing intelligence? Lord Janus himself?

Sir Char. Come, come, be more ingenuous; you know it is so, you know it must be so.

Ele. My father indeed may say it must be so, but I did not expect to be told it by Sir Charles Freemantle.

Sir Char. Put no more artifices, fair deceiver, upon Sir Charles Freemantle; he is quitting you this very moment; for, believe me, he does not aspire to be the rival of his friend, nor is he over-envious of any happiness that awaits him.

Ele. When you charge me with artifice, I am sure there has been some malice employ'd against me, and I make no doubt Lord Janus is the author of it; but when you retort upon me for those unguarded

advances, which prove me only too void of artifice, I can reconcile your treatment of me neither to justice nor humanity.

Sir Char. If I seem to deal unjustly, madam, 'tis from the error I was in, when I thought you was the very child of nature, all simplicity and truth; when your danger awaken'd my sensibility, and your charms sunk deep into my heart: yet even in that moment of my dotage I had fortitude to withstand your allurements, when I found another in possession of your heart.

Ele. My heart! Lord Janus never had an interest in my heart.

Sir Char. Well! perhaps not, let that pass—but do you mean to assert he was never encouraged to believe he had that interest?

Ele. I can truly assert it.

Sir Char. What, never once in favour with you? not one kind moment, not one glorious golden opportunity?

Ele. Oh, Sir Charles, Sir Charles, what can have tempted you to this cruel, this ungenerous treatment of me?

Sir Char. She weeps! Guilty, upon my honour! [*Aside.*

Ele. How have I deserved it of you? Wou'd to heaven I had never seen you, though I had met my death instead! [*She weeps.*

CAPTAIN GEORGE *enters to them.*

Capt. Geo. How is this, Sir Charles Freemantle? I doubt you have broken faith with me: this is one more meeting than I bargain'd for.

Sir Char. It is one more, sir, than I wish'd for.

Capt. Geo. In tears, my Eleanor? what has afflicted you?

Ele. Nothing, 'tis no matter; let us return to the house.

Capt. Geo. I shall not leave this spot till I know the cause of your disorder: Have you received an insult?

Ele. None, but what (thank heaven) I have the spirit to despise. [*Exit.*

Capt. Geo. Go home, my dear, I'll follow you—And now, Sir Charles, for you.

Sir Char. Well, sir, and what for me?

Capt. Geo. Correction, vengeance—if you have dared to insult the feelings of that lady.

[*Handling his sword.*

Sir Char. I am arm'd, sir; if you choose to give your sword an airing, please yourself; I shall obey your motions in mere complaisance to your humour; for really I don't know any cause of quarrel between you and me.

Capt. Geo. Well, sir, I'm not a man to quarrel without cause; I came hither understanding you was to have a meeting with Lord Janus, and I came not upon curious but friendly motives, to give testimony on your part, had occasion call'd for it; instead of which, I surprise you with my niece; I find her bath'd in tears; I hear her charge you with an insult: what am I to think of this?

Sir Char. Upon my word, sir, I can make no guess at your thoughts, I can only answer for my own.

Capt. Geo. And what are they?

Sir Char. That's rather short, let me observe; some thoughts I shall keep to myself; such as I can spare are at your service—for instance, I think your niece will be a very handsome bride, and my lord a very happy bridegroom.

Capt. Geo. Did she inform you that was to happen?

Sir Char. I cannot say she did; it was her pleasure to deny it.

Capt. Geo. Then why do you presume to the con-

trary? Did Lord Janus assert he had her consent to marry him?

Sir Char. I have not seen Lord Janus.

Capt. Geo. For shame! for shame! I blush to hear you so prevaricate: such meanness, let me tell you, scarce deserves a gentleman's resentment.

Sir Char. Meanness! prevaricate! what language is this? I tell you once again, I have not seen Lord Janus.

Capt. Geo. 'Tis false! I know 'tis false.

Sir Char. Intolerable insult! Draw! (*They draw.*)

[ELEANOR *runs in between them.*

Ele. For heaven's sake, hold your hands! I'll die between your swords.

Capt. Geo. She faints—contain yourself; we'll find another time. [*Supports* ELEANOR.

Sir Char. What am I doing? Her emotion staggers me.

OLIVER *enters.*

Oliv. Oh the mercy of mercies! what's a-going forward here? Swords out! Miss in a swoon! the lud be good unto us all! Murder and sudden death.

Capt. Geo. Hold your tongue, blockhead! what do you come here for?

Oliv. I cou'd have told you, but you have scared it out of my head again: I come—(pray, sir, put up your sword.) [*To* SIR CHARLES]—I come—(dear sir, put it up or I shall swoon too—) his worship bid me come to you.

Capt. Geo. She recovers; look up, my dear, no mischief has happen'd.

Ele. Heaven be thank'd! I am sure Sir Charles would not have been so cruel to me, if Lord Janus had not provoked him to it.

Oliv. Why, 'tis about Lord Janus I am come: He tells us he has driven you, Sir Charles, out of the

country, but, under favour, I don't perceive you are far upon your way as yet.

Capt. Geo. There, sir! you said you had not seen Lord Janus.

Sir Char. I say it again and again.

Oliv. Oh wonderful, what some folks will say! but I beg pardon; pray don't draw your sword again; 'tis only a small slip of your memory.

Sir Char. I saw his servant, and no other person but his servant.

Oliv. Who, old Philibert? lud-a-mercy, only to hear him—why the old baboon is dead drunk; and fast asleep in bed. Under correction, your honour's memory is apt to trip.

Sir Char. What ails the fool? 'twas Harry Singleton I spoke with.

Oliv. Whuh! that's a good one—Harry Singleton forsooth! where does he come from?

Capt. Geo. Stop! there are more mysteries in this than one: The person you saw, Sir Charles, I saw likewise—Hark ye, Oliver, get you out of the way; go back to your master, and say I'm coming home with my niece: on your life, I charge you not to discover to a soul that you have seen Sir Charles here; let not a word that has now pass'd come out of your lips.

Oliv. May I never put any thing into them again, if I do. [*Exit.*

Capt. Geo. I think you said your friend Lord Janus has a servant call'd Harry Singleton?

Sir Char. His valet de chambre; I know him well.

Capt. Geo. And he it was who was with you just now?

Sir Char. The very man; I told you so: Lord Janus sent him to me with a message.

Capt. Geo. Then Lord Janus carried his own message, ay and wears his own livery, for we know none other.

Ele. No, indeed; his lordship has no servant of that name with us.

Sir Char. Oh, heaven and earth! it flashes shame and conviction in my face! I have been the dupe of an impostor! How can I ever atone for what I have said? Oh, lovely innocent! I have offended past redemption.

Capt. Geo. Come, come, I do not think so desperately of your pardon; there seems a spark of kindness for you still lurking in a certain heart, which is not quite made of marble.

Ele. I believe Sir Charles has made that discovery some time ago.

Capt. Geo. There, there, make the best use of your time for reconciling differences, whilst I step into the village, for the proper officers to apprehend these impostors; I don't doubt but I shall find you friends at my return, and then we will all jointly enjoy the luxury of this most fortunate discovery. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The Grove, as before.

SIR CHARLES *and* ELEANOR, *meeting* CAPTAIN GEORGE.

Capt. Geo. Well, my pretty Eleanor, how has your conference ended? Are you still inexorable? Must I set to again with this vile man, and put him to death before your face, or has he soften'd your hard heart into pity and complacency?

Ele. Can't you read his sentence in my eyes?

Capt. Geo. Oh terrible! it must be a very severe one.

Ele. 'Tis no slight one in good truth; for, though I have not doom'd him to immediate death, I have consign'd him to perpetual imprisonment for life.

Capt. Geo. I admire your justice; if you had suffer'd such a criminal to escape out of your hands, I should have been the first to condemn you for your weakness.

Ele. So far from that, I resolve to keep him close prisoner, very close I can assure you; with my good will, he shall never be out of my sight for the rest of our days.

Sir Char. Oh, thou enchanting natural creature! with a heart so open, so transparent as thine, an hour's acquaintance is an age of experience; think me not so mere a trifler as to be the captive of a smile, a glance; beauty, if not animated by a soul like thine, has no allurements for me; thou art nature itself, and with nature I am safe; but the confidence thou art so ready to repose in me should have better ground to rest on, than its own generosity alone; I shall demand a scrutiny before I will accept of my election.

Ele. A very proper compliment you pay to my sagacity! though I have shewn you I am capable of discovering the false character, and sham pretensions of a counterfeit, you won't credit me for discerning the good and genuine qualities of a man of honour: How is this? I desire to know if truth is not as obvious in its natural character as falsehood in a feign'd one?

Capt. Geo. Well said, my Eleanor; let him answer that if he can: I am a witness you was never duped by this sham lord; your natural intuition saw more than our older experience could discover: for my part I did not like him, but I did not absolutely suspect him, and when Sir Charles spoke so highly of his merit, I confess I was fairly stagger'd.

Ele. So was not I as to my own judgment of Lord Janus; I own I was puzzled how to account for Sir Charles's.

Sir Char. That must have appear'd egregiously absurd—But is it not time we proceeded to the detection of him?

Capt. Geo. With all my heart; my myrmidons are ready, and you must let me steal you into the house by a back way, where I will keep you out of sight, till I give the signal for your appearance; what punishment we shall or can inflict upon these rascals will be a future question; there will, at least, be some amusement in the discovery. You are not aware, perhaps, he has an accomplice with him, one Polycarp.

Ele. I have told Sir Charles of that, and been malicious enough to let him into the secret Atalantis of our family.

Capt. Geo. Ah, my poor Dorothy! she has not given me a kind glance since that fellow came into the house; so long as she has been upon the cruise for a mate, I shou'd be sorry she shou'd strike to a pirate at last—But come, let us lose no more time.

Sir Char. And has this time been lost, my charmer?

Ele. Not by me at least, if the life that you have saved may, from this happy moment, be devoted to its preserver.

Capt. Geo. Come, come, no more love-making, but follow me; I shall lead you through a blind and a crooked path, where nobody can discover you; but remember it is the path to happiness, and therefore follow boldly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in SIR SOLOMON'S *House.*

LORD JANUS *enters alone.*

Now then I am a man again, a man of my own making, a peer by my own patent, lord of my own ascendant; and who suffers by my good fortune? who sinks that I may swim? Not Sir Charles Freemantle, for him I have dispatch'd upon his travels, and 'twill be hard, if he does not come home a wiser man than he set out; not grave Sir Solomon, for he is a fool of his own making; not even fair Eleanor herself, for I will make her a most loving husband;

and why should I alone be call'd an impostor for a mere flaw in my title, when there are so many worse impostors about the world, who counterfeit love before marriage, and turn tyrants after it?

Enter SIR SOLOMON *to* LORD JANUS.

Sir Sol. Well, my good lord, what news do you give me of Sir Charles?

Ld Jan. The best that can be: You have seen the last of him.

Sir Sol. Marry let him go, and a good riddance say I: I guess'd how it would be when your lordship took him in hand; I thought he could not have the face to stand his ground.

Ld Jan. To do him justice, I had very little trouble in bringing him to a proper understanding of himself, as soon as I convinced him I was serious in my intentions to make your daughter Lady Janus.

Sir Sol. I believe he was inform'd of that by my brother George.

Ld Jan. 'Tis very true, but he was pleased to say he would take it upon nobody's word but my own; men of the world, Sir Solomon, are hard to believe that persons of high rank and nobility will step out of their own line for an alliance, when there is so much beauty and attraction amongst their equals; but I have no such pride of nobility about me; my only ambition is to be happy, and I persuade myself your amiable daughter is the very woman in the world to make me so.

Sir Sol. My lord, I am fully sensible of your great condescension in accepting of my humble alliance, and I hope, if you can overlook the little awkwardnesses and reluctances of an inexperienced girl like my Eleanor, you will find her mend upon acquaintance.

Ld Jan. Doubt not, Sir Solomon, but I can make allowances for such trifling foibles as I have disco-

ver'd in Miss Eleanor. So far from being piqued at her seeming partiality for Sir Charles, I like her the better for it: it proves to me that her nature is susceptible of love; and, as I hope to render her greater services than he has perform'd, I don't doubt of meriting greater returns of love than he has received.

Sir Sol. Your lordship charms me with the generous candour of your noble sentiments. I do not say to you that my daughter shall obey me, because I trust there will be no such repugnance on her part, as may provoke me to compulsion; but, be this as it may, at all events, I beg you to conclude the thing as done; and now, my lord, permit me to address you as a member of my family, and tell you that there is an affair now in agitation which gives me great alarm.

Ld Jan. I guess the matter you allude to.

Sir Sol. I dare say your lordship does, and I hope you have that influence and authority over Mr Polycarp as may prevent it: My cousin Dorothy is an old maid, and as that is a condition, not of her own chusing, I am afraid there will be little difficulty in persuading her to change it: now, my lord, her fortune, which is no trifle, sleeps in my hands, and if she calls it out in haste, she will disable me from paying down the full sum upon the nail which I am pledged for to your lordship.

Ld Jan. Depend upon it, Sir Solomon, I am as anxious to prevent this match as you can be, and I will take occasion to talk to Mr Polycarp in a way that shall make him desist.

Sir Sol. Pray, my lord, if the question be not an improper one, what is Mr Polycarp's situation in life?

Ld Jan. Mr Polycarp's situation is dependent; I took him into my pay, to relieve me from the drudgery of writing letters to agents, and auditing accounts with stewards; he understands law, and is no

bad scholar, though something of the pedagogue; for, to say the truth, he was awhile ago an usher in a country school; he is by no means of condition to aspire to Mrs Dorothy.

Sir Sol. You have said enough, my lord; the country usher is enough; there's an end of Mr Polycarp; there's not another old damsel in all England so proud of her family as cousin Dorothy: but apropos! here comes my gentleman; with your lordship's leave, I will turn him over to you, to prepare him for his dismission. [*Exit.*

Enter POLYCARP *to* LORD JANUS.

Pol. All joy to you, my noble! you return with flying colours from your expedition.

Ld Jan. Ay, my good lad, we are at last in port—

We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

I have made a short step out of character, like many of my brother peers, to regale myself with the humours of the vulgar, and now step into it again to laugh at those I have cajoled by it.

Pol. "Then Cæsar is himself again."—But what is become of Sir Charles?

Ld Jan. Blown into the air, upon bladders of his own credulity: of all the fools honesty ever made, he is best entitled to wear the cap, and he is now journeying, like a caparison'd ass, to the jingle of his own bells—But how go you on with your Dorothy?

Pol. A merry pace; if you are not very brisk we shall get the start of you.

Ld Jan. Nay, Jack, if you start your old stager first, I shall never bring my young filly up to the post: you must positively give me the lead.

Pol. I must you think? no, no, my master, a free course, and no favour! stand to your own conditions; good faith is to be kept, though we deal in the dark.

Ld Jan. Do you discredit my honour?

Pol. By no means; I credit you for your honour to the full as much as I do for your title, but I had rather trust to your knavery than either, for knave to knave must be honest, or adieu to the trade; therefore, you will marry Eleanor when Eleanor is in the mind to marry; and I shall move off with Dorothy when Dorothy will move off with me.

Ld Jan. But hark ye, Jack, hear reason; when two projects are on foot together, they may clash, and I must fairly tell you, you have given an alarm to the family already.

Pol. To the family! yes, you are very considerate of the family, are you not? Remember your own parting words just now, when you sneak'd away from detection, like a coward from his colours, and left me to maintain a post you did not dare to stand in; then you was humble enough to ask protection under my shield.

Ld Jan. Protection from you! Wretch, didn't I take you out of the gripe of poverty, from the very jaws of famine? a starving usher in a country school? promoted you to a share in this great enterprise, furnish'd and equipt you for it like a gentleman?—And is your hunger now so ravenous as to whet your teeth against your friend? are you so mere a shark as to eat shark? Shame upon you!

SIR SOLOMON *enters to* LORD JANUS.

Sir Sol. My lord, my lord, a word in your ear! I pray you step out for a few minutes, and leave the field to Dorothy: I have loaded her to the very muzzle, and she is opening such a battery of red-hot pride and ridicule against the poor pedagogue, as shall beat his school about his ears in a twinkling; let us get out of their way.

Ld Jan. With all my heart; so I am but revenged

of that rascal, I care not what happens; come along, Sir Solomon. [*Exit with* SIR SOLOMON.

POLYCARP, *alone.*

Very well, Mr Harry Singleton, I'll match you for this insolence; I'll be off with Dorothy this very night, though you and your fine project shall be blown into the air by it next morning—Oh, happy fortune! here she comes—

MRS. DOROTHY *enters.*

My life, my soul! thus let me fly into your arms. [*Offers to embrace her.*

Mrs Dor. Not so fast, friend, not so fast—keep your distance, and I will talk to you.

Pol. Why keep my distance, my charmer? are we not alone? are we not agreed? What have you now to fear from Sir Solomon, or his spies, that you should act with this reserve?

Mrs Dor. Mistake me not; I have no reserve from Sir Solomon; he and I have talked you over very pleasantly, I can assure you.

Pol. Talk'd me over very pleasantly!—

Mrs Dor. Oh yes, I told him what a fine lover I had got o'the sudden; it's impossible, you know, not to boast of one's conquests; I have been hammering my brains to recollect the smart things you have been saying to me.

Pol. Really! you have been hammering your brains, have you? very pleasant work, truly! And did you hammer out all I have been saying to you?

Mrs Dor. There were but few sayings worth recollecting; them I gave you credit for.

Pol. And my doings—did you not recollect them too? I think, all things consider'd, Mrs Dorothy, I deserve some credit for them.

Mrs Dor. Humph! Impertinence.

Pol. Well, then, take the credit of them to yourself.

Mrs Dor. Pr'ythee, don't be scurrilous; recollect yourself; a man of your sort should be grave and solemn, and, to act in character, you should set an example of wisdom and morality to youth.

Pol. Socrates was wise, madam, and moral too, yet he sometimes fool'd away an hour with the profligate Aspasia.

Mrs Dor. The more shame for him! for Socrates, as I take it, was a schoolmaster: What would he have said, if one of his petty ushers had so behaved?

Pol. So, so! Sir Solomon talk'd that over with you too, did he?

Mrs Dor. Just so, and would have persuaded me all your fine speeches were taken out of your schoolboys' copy-books.

Pol. Pleasant, very pleasant truly! I am to thank my Lord Janus for this retail specimen of his wit.

Mrs Dor. To be sure you are; not but we could have discover'd it by your air and manner; there is a good deal of the birch about you.

Pol. Whatever there is to spare I wou'd very readily bestow upon you.

Mrs Dor. To be sure Lord Janus made himself rather merry at the idea of your making love; I don't say he has all the wit in the world, but you know his manner; he has infinite vivacity.

Pol. I think he has infinite impudence at least.

Mrs Dor. Come, come, you must not quarrel with your patron for a joke; people in your dependent station must put up with the raillery of their superiors.

Pol. I shall elevate his lordship still higher before I have done with him.

Mrs Dor. It is not in the nature of things, you

know, to suppose a person of your sort cou'd have serious hopes of marrying me.

Pol. That's true; I only thought of it at a distance, as a man thinks of hanging when he takes a purse upon the road; the halter might be in my thoughts, though the noose was not round my neck.

Mrs Dor. You deal in delicate allusions truly.

Pol. And yet I had rather take the allusion than the lady at any time; a good tough rope, that ends all plagues at once, is better than a tough old woman, whose plagues there is no end to.

Mrs Dor. Well, sir, I shall recommend you to the alternative, and yet, to do you justice, you took due pains to obtain the lady, and escape the rope.

Pol. Yes, I might perhaps have put up with the old hen, if it had not been for her cackling.

Mrs Dor. And yet, 'tis no more than you have been pretty well wonted to; there are a great many tongues going in a school.

Pol. Ay, but there is a joyful time in a school, call'd breaking-up time; had I seen my damsel in the way of breaking-up, I might have stood the tug in hopes of holidays hereafter.

Enter LORD JANUS *to them.*

Ld Jan. I hope I interrupt no business?

Pol. No, my lord, you come very opportunely, for I had run out my stock of compliments, and got to the last copy in the book; and really this fair lady has been so kind, in consequence of your flattering report of me, that love and vanity have nearly turn'd your poor pedagogue's brain,

Mrs Dor. Vanity I admit, but what do you mean by love?

Pol. More than most men mean who profess it—sincerity; for instance, when I said but now, it was the blooming bride-maid, not the bride herself, I

shou'd gaze upon with rapture, it was you I had in my eye.

Mrs Dor. 'Tis false; he said no such thing, my lord.

Pol. When I said I envied not my lord his happiness, sigh'd not for those scenes of splendour, those vast possessions, those fine castles that await him—in the air, it was because I thought of you, my angel!—

Mrs Dor. I desire you will not think of me any more, nor speak of me.

Pol. When I said you was the very idol of my soul, that your voice was harmony, and your eyes heaven—

Mrs Dor. Pr'ythee no more of this stuff.

Pol. That your smiles were sunshine, and your temper soft, serene, enlivening, as the light which it diffuses; 'twas you, you only, I was then describing.

Mrs Dor. Stop your saucy tongue. My Lord Janus, will you suffer me to be thus insulted in your presence?

Pol. When I was pleasantly talking you over in this manner, and hammering my poor brains to recollect all the soft things you had said, all the kind things you had done—

Ld Jan. Hold, Mr Polycarp, this goes too far—Madam, I entreat you to retire.

Mrs Dor. I will, my lord, and out of this house, if such insolence is not corrected. [*Exit.*

Ld Jan. Hark ye, sir!

Pol. Well, sir.

Ld Jan. I don't like these jests.

Pol. No more does she, it seems.

Ld Jan. Nor will I allow of them.

Pol. Indeed!

Ld Jan. You shall repent of this, Mr Polycarp.

Pol. You had best not put me upon that, Mr Singleton, for fear I should repent of your company

at the same time, and consign you over to the executioner for your patent.

Ld Jan. Is it come to this? do you threaten to impeach me, villain, informer? I'll tear your throat out first. [*Seizes him, they struggle.*

SIR SOLOMON *and* OLIVER *enter hastily.*

Sir Sol. Hey-day! what's here to do?

Oliv. Help, help, good Christian people! the little man will be murder'd by the great man.

Ld Jan. Sir Solomon here! hush, hush, man! say no more; let go your hold; I'll bring you off. [*Apart to* POLYCARP.

CAPTAIN GEORGE *enters.*

Oliv. Ah, noble captain, I am glad you're come; for once in your life step out of your office, and keep the peace between these passionate gentlemen.

Ld Jan. My good friend Oliver, did I look as if I was in a passion?

Oliv. Did you look as if you was in a passion? yes, no lord need be in a greater, and you spoke as if you was in a passion too—Only mind me, Captain George—(*Mimicks him.*) "Villain! informer! do you threaten to impeach me? I'll tear your throat out first."—That was it; there you have it to the life.

Sir Sol. I am all astonishment! Those were the very words.

Ld Jan. They were so; you are right as to the words; you are correct in the words, Sir Solomon, and your parrot mimicks them pretty well.

Oliv. Don't I? Villain, informer!—then I am to catch hold of Mr Polycarp by the throat; isn't it so, my lord? but if I had been in the little man's shoes, I cou'd have placed a blow where your lordship wou'dn't have liked it; you was open at the fifth button.

Capt. Geo. Hush, Oliver, be silent.

Ld Jan. And so you both thought me in a real passion—you cou'd not flatter me more. I believe, captain, you did not come in time to see the rehearsal.

Capt. Geo. No, but I hope I am not too late for the conclusion.

Ld Jan. Well, Polycarp, methinks we came very well off in our quarrelling scene this time; we shall get up this play with some eclat.

Pol. If too many rehearsals don't spoil it.

Sir Sol. What the dickens! were you only acting a play all this while?

Ld Jan. Only acting a play, Sir Solomon! What else is the whole beau monde employ'd about? I do but as the rest of my brother nobles: I am fitting up the great hall in Janus Castle for my theatre; there's an end of all old-fashion'd customs; instead of dinners of five courses, we serve you up dramas of five acts; feast your ears, and fast your stomachs.

Capt. Geo. Confound the fellow! his ingenuity almost excuses his iniquity.

Oliv. Well, to be sure, if you call this a play, I have seen many a one in my time, and never thought the actors in earnest before.

Sir Sol. Hold your tongue, sirrah! but, my lord, a word or two about this play—I am pretty well versed in the poets, and don't remember any thing about tearing a gentleman's throat out on the stage.

Pol. Pardon me, Sir Solomon, there is great tearing of throats on the stage; but, you must know, this piece is in manuscript; the author's modesty don't mean to publish it.

Capt. Geo. If my lord is the author, I dare say he does not wish his name to be known.

Pol. No, truly, if his lordship comes into the world it will be under a feign'd title.

Mrs Dorothy *enters.*

Capt Geo. So, cousin Dorothy, you come too late for the rehearsal; my lord and Mr Polycarp have been performing in a very capital style.

Mrs Dor. What is it you mean? what has his lordship been performing?

Capt. Geo. Oh! such a scene of fire and fury—Poor Mr Polycarp had like to have been strangled by the vehemence of his acting.

Mrs Dor. What tell you me of acting? His lordship feels a proper indignation for the insults I have received.

Sir Sol. Pooh, child! 'twas only a part of a play they were repeating.

Mrs Dor. I understand his lordship's delicacy in giving it that turn, and I hold myself for ever bound to him for taking up my cause so warmly.

Ld Jan. Really, madam, you give me more credit than I deserve.

Pol. Come, come, be silent upon that subject; you will but expose yourself.

Mrs Dor. Now you have been properly chastised, I hope I shall no more be troubled with your impertinence: A paltry pedagogue indeed to talk in such a style to a person of my sort!

Sir Sol. Why, who talks to a person of your sort? Can't you be persuaded that nobody thought about you?

Mrs Dor. If nobody thought more about me than you, or the doughty captain there, I might have been subjected to any indignities in your house; but my Lord Janus has the spirit of a nobleman, and will not suffer a lady to be insulted with impunity.

Pol. Well, madam, I confess you have reason to be offended; I have certainly omitted some points

of civility, which you had a right to expect, and so, to set all matters strait, I'll leave the house this very moment.

Capt. Geo. Stay, sir!—You have had your play, let us have our's; the performers are all ready, and only wait the prompter's signal; I'll touch the bell, and let 'em enter.

CAPTAIN GEORGE *rings a bell, and* SIR CHARLES FREEMANTLE *enters with* ELEANOR *and Constables.*

Ld Jan. My death-warrant, by all that's terrible!

Sir Sol. Hey-day! who are these?

Capt. Geo. Very capital performers some of them; these worthy fellows play the parts of constables; the ladies were to have been married in the play to a pair of the most infamous sharpers in the kingdom, but they have escaped out of their clutches; this gentleman, who is nothing better than a lord's lacquey, plays the part of his master; this other gentleman, who is his brother in iniquity, has been seized by the throat, and by the throat will be seiz'd when it is over: the manager and director of the whole movement, to whom alone we are indebted for the happy turn of the plot, you behold in this worthy baronet, the benefactor, friend, and preserver of us all.

Oliv. I hope, noble captain, you will not forget to reserve a part for the hangman.

Sir Sol. Mercy of mercies! have I been duped, gull'd, bamboozled, after all?

Capt. Geo. Egregiously, my good brother.

Mrs Dor. To be sure you have. Cou'd not you find out your impostor as readily as I did mine?

Oliv. Perhaps his worship did not look so close as you did.

Pol. Come, you are well off; hold your tongue and be thankful.

Sir Char. Sir Solomon, I congratulate you on

your escape. You have been harbouring a knavish lacquey, under a counterfeited title of a noble lord.—Now, Mr Harry Singleton, stand forth! What have you to say for yourself?

Ld Jan. Very little, Sir Charles. I have certainly made free with his lordship's title; but I have endeavoured to do it all the honour in my power.

Sir Char. You do it honour, sirrah! how can that be?

Ld Jan. By bestowing it on the most amiable young lady in the kingdom.

Sir Char. Well, sir, there is some ingenuity in your defence, but it would be an injury to mankind to let such a fellow loose upon the world. Sir Solomon, you are an acting magistrate, you will make out his commitment.

Sir Sol. I an acting magistrate, Sir Charles! I am an acting fool if you please: give him his dismission, and send me to the house of correction in his room.

Oliv. If I might advise, your worship shou'd turn him over to the jurymen in livery, and then he will be tried by his peers.

Ld Jan. Oh, Sir Charles Freemantle, I beseech you to take pity upon a poor young fellow, who has known better days, and been corrupted by the evil habits of that fraternity, into which his hard fortune inlisted him; put me into any humble way of life, and I will be honest.

Pol. Canting rascal! I always thought you wou'd die dunghill at the last.

Capt. Geo. Hey-day, here's a sturdy spirit! 'tis a pity we have no pressgangs going: Cousin Dorothy, what shall we do with this fellow?

Mrs Dor. Do with him! there's no doing any thing with him: let the law deal with him as he deserves.

Pol. Mitigate my sentence, I beseech you: save me from matrimony, and I submit to transportation.

Sir Sol. Well, my child, all joy to you: 'Tis the

first match I have attempted to make for you, and it shall be the last: hereafter let your own inclinations be your guide.

Capt. Geo. I believe, Eleanor, I can pretty nearly guess which way they will lead you.

Ele. Ah, my dear uncle, you have a talent for discoveries.

Sir Char. Sir Solomon, you have no impostor now to deal with; my character will meet the scrutiny. May I not aspire to claim what I have been so happy as to save?

Sir Sol. With all my heart, and my blessing to boot; I know you well, Sir Charles, and shall be proud of your alliance. Now let us have a general gaol delivery, and since his mock lordship has fairly brought his drama to its catastrophe, let us drop our curtain, and humbly hope for the plaudit of your hands. [*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

WIFE OF TWO HUSBANDS;

A

MUSICAL DRAMA.

IN THREE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

BY

JAMES COBB.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT BELFIOR,	*Mr H. Johnston.*
MAURICE,	*Mr Wroughton.*
THEODORE,	*Miss De Camp.*
MONTENERO,	*Mr Kelly.*
ARMAGH,	*Mr Johnston.*
CARRONADE,	*Mr Bannister, jun.*
FRITZ,	*Mr Caulfield.*
WALTER,	*Mr Cooke.*
ROBBERS,	*Mr Burrows, Mr Maddocks, Mr Fisher, &c.*
SERVANT,	*Mr Webb.*
COUNTESS BELFIOR,	*Mrs Powell.*
EUGENIA,	*Mrs Mountain.*
NINETTA,	*Mrs Bland.*

Banditti, Peasants, &c.

SCENE,—Sicily.

THE

WIFE OF TWO HUSBANDS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Wood, with the Entrance of a Cave.—Distant View of Mount Etna.—It is night.

Several Banditti discovered listening for a distant signal.—At first a calm—but during the following Chorus, a storm commences, and a faint flame is perceived to arise from Mount Etna.

CHORUS OF BANDITTI.

Hark! those well-known signals tell
Our comrades with a booty near.
Loud let the greeting chorus swell
Haste to prepare the festive cheer.

But, ah! behold the sudden storm,
The starry face of night deform!
See, as his smoky columns rise,
Etna sullen joy proclaims:
With deeper thunders mocks the skies,
And hails the tempest with his flames.

Enter WALTER, *and several others of the Banditti.*

1*st Rob.* A perilous night, comrades—Lucky is he who can get shelter from the storm.

Wal. 'Tis an ill wind that blows good to no one—The darkness of the night has thrown booty in our way—We have taken some prisoners.

1*st Rob.* Of much value?

Wal. I'faith I know not yet; but it is time we should be informed.—Bring the prisoners hither.

Enter FRITZ, *brought in by two of the Banditti.*

1*st Rob.* Why, what have we here? Verily, comrade, the night must have been dark indeed, when you could have thought this prize worth taking. [*Exit.*

Wal. (*To* FRITZ.) Who are you?

Fritz. What boots it to you to know who or what I am?

Wal. Your appearance bespeaks that you are fallen beneath a misfortune.

Fritz. No—misfortune cannot conquer me.—I am indeed poor—too poor to be robbed: therefore let me go.—You cannot take any thing from me, and I am sure you will give me nothing.

Wal. Perhaps you may be mistaken—your courage and your poverty join in recommending our occupation to your choice.—What say you—will you be one of us?

Fritz. Of that more hereafter—life is a game of chance, and I have ventured most deeply on its risque; but, bankrupt as I seem, I have still one

more stake to play for—if that fails, perhaps I shall not object to become one of you.

Wal. I like your boldness—your hand on the promise. I am next in authority under our chief, and can do with my comrades what I please.—You shall have command among us.

Fritz. Say ye so?—Then give me your assistance—I need the aid of an intrepid friend—Perhaps I may make your fortune.

Wal. Gold will ever buy my services—They are yours.

Re-enter 1*st Robber.*

1*st Rob.* We have taken a prize indeed, and shall have glorious ransom—The rich Count Belfior.

Fritz. Count Belfior!

Wal. Do you know the count? He has a noble estate hard by, just at the foot of the mountain.

Fritz. He approaches—Count Belfior must not see me here. Retire—retire—I will explain my reasons. [*Exeunt* FRITZ *and* WALTER.

Enter COUNT BELFIOR *with two of the Banditti.*

Count Bel. Shew me to your chief.

1*st Rob.* Behold him here, my lord—the valiant Montenero.

Enter MONTENERO *from the Cave.*

Count Bel. Why am I thus detained by lawless force?

Mon. Pardon, my lord, the obstruction of a moment—You are free.

1*st Rob.* We will not lose our prize.

Mon. Rebel, be silent. (*Pointing a pistol at him.*) This punishes a murmur against my will. (*To the Count.*) My lord, accept your sword in token of my faith. (*Gives him his sword.*)

Count Bel. Montenero, forgive my astonishment—But this generosity—

Mon. Ay—this generosity in a robber, you would say—an outlaw—But who is this outlaw?——Remember, Count Belfior, my birth was noble, and I had fair estates; but envy traduced me to my master, the King of Sicily, and I was banished.

Count Bel. Montenero, you must have offended greatly—the king is never unjust—But you claim my thanks—my life was in your power—you have restored me to liberty.—How can I manifest my gratitude?

Mon. You may, my lord, render me essential service, by an action worthy of your noble nature.

Count Bel. Declare your wish.

Mon. You behold before you a repentant outlaw—You, my lord, have influence with our monarch: exert that influence to obtain my pardon.

Count Bel. How shall I glory to become your advocate!—Come, set me onward, and apprize my faithful follower I am ready.

Mon. Your follower, my lord—I have not seen him yet: please to accept some refreshment within the cave; and him for whom you enquire shall be brought hither.

[*Exeunt* MONTENERO *and* COUNT *into the Cave.*

Enter ARMAGH, *fighting with two of the Banditti.*

Arm. That's right, my brave boys—I only ask for fair play—no more than two at a time, and I am your man.

1*st Rob.* Take quarter.

Arm. Not I, I'll neither give nor take quarter—and the reason is, because I hate to do things by halves.

(*They fight again, and* ARMAGH *is disarmed.*)

2*d Rob.* Now you are at our mercy.

Arm. So much the better; then I suppose I am safe.

1*st Rob.* Safe, indeed!

Arm. Ay, to be sure—with a generous enemy, a man is most powerfully protected when his means of defence are taken from him.

1*st Rob.* Who are you?

Arm. An Irishman, and a soldier; my name is Sergeant Armagh, at your service.

1*st Rob.* A native of Ireland?

Arm. Yes, I am a native of Ireland—one reason for that is, I was born there.—I am not ashamed of my birth place—'tis in the next parish to Old England. Ah! Great Britain and Ireland are as pretty a pair of islands as ever providence coupled together in the salt seas; and may that providence which coupled them never permit them to be disunited.

1*st Rob.* Whence come you?

Arm. From the wars; where I have been fighting under the command of the noble Count Belfior.

1*st Rob.* And whither are you going?

Arm. I am going home—to have a little more fighting.

1*st Rob.* More fighting, and at home! What calls you thither?

Arm. The voice of my country, honey—Our enemies threaten to invade us, and if they will pay us the visit, I think it would be but civil to be at home, to give the scoundrels a warm reception.

1*st Rob.* My brave fellow, you must not go without partaking of our noble chief's hospitality. Return him his sword.—Come, taste our wine.

(*Several of the Banditti come forward with wine.*

Arm. Gentlemen, I am too well-bred to refuse your offer.

(1*st Robber pours out wine, and* ARMAGH *drinks.*)

1*st Rob.* Again. (*Pours out more wine.*)

Arm. 'Tis the fashion in my country to give a toast.—I'll give you one—Here's the two brightest jewels in the crown of Great Britain, "Liberty and Loyalty." (*Drinks.*)

1*st Rob.* See, your master is taking his departure.

Enter the COUNT *and* MONTENERO *from the Cave—during a Symphony which precedes the following Chorus. The* COUNT *comes forward, and embraces* ARMAGH—*who, with the* COUNT, *go off preceded by* MONTENERO, *and followed by two of the Banditti as an escort. The chorus then commences.*

CHORUS OF BANDITTI.

Press into the festive bowl
The nectar'd juice which joy inspires.
Th' approving mountain's thunders roll:
The grape was nurtur'd by his fires.
The ruddy flame from Etna thrown,
Its lustre on our bowl bestows;
And marks the nectar for its own,
Which tinged with brighter purple glows. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in the Castle.

Enter EUGENIA.

Eug. My poor sister, how I pity thee—too well do I know the pain of concealing the secret of the heart. Dear youth whom I love—even in this cruel

absence fancy shall bring thee to my sight, and repeat thy vows of constancy and truth.

SONG.

To sleep's embrace with joy I fly,
And friendly dreams to lovers dear:
For then his form shall charm mine eye,
For then his voice shall charm mine ear.
No longer then can Fortune's power
Withhold my lover from my sight:
And Fancy in her conquering hour,
With love shall gild her visions bright.

Enter CARRONADE.

Car. (*Singing as he enters.*) "Hearts of Oak are our ships, jolly tars are our men," &c.——Ah, there's nothing like Old England after all—she's a first-rate in the world, and ever will remain so—and as for her crew—there's nobody like 'em.

Eug. Well, Carronade, how do your pupils come on? Are they ready with their best songs and dances to receive the Count Belfior on his return?

Car. Ha! ha! ha! These peasants are a set of the awkwardest dogs—I can make nothing of them. It is true, I am appointed master of the revels—principal dancer, and march-monger—and leader of the choruses—but I can't get any body to sing and dance as I like.

Eug. How so?

Car. How so?—Why I can't get 'em to do any thing in the English fashion—they squall, and they caper—and I suppose they do their best—but as for your elegant dancing—there's nothing like a hornpipe. And as to their singing—for my part, I'd rather hear "Hearts of Oak," or "Rule Britannia," than all the tweedledums in Italy.

Eug. But remember, my good friend Carronade, you are in Sicily, and you cannot expect that Sicilian peasants——

Car. True, as you say—I don't expect them to be equal to my own countrymen—It is not every body has the good fortune, as I have, to be born in England, to be sure—and so the more the pity for them, poor souls.—But there is our good, our worthy master, the count, returning to his home, and I want to receive him as one ought to do—not merely with a tune to tickle the ear, but with something that comes from the heart—with three cheers now—Oh! how I love three cheers!

Eug. You owe the count a debt of gratitude.

Car. I do—he saved my life: when I was shipwrecked upon this coast, and had almost taken my last draught of salt water, the count, heaven bless him! dashed into the waves to save me from sinking, and gave me safe convoy on shore—I am, indeed, bound to him by gratitude: 'Tis a cable of nature's twisting—if I could ever snap it, I deserve to drive to the devil.

Enter Servant with a letter.

Serv. A letter for the countess.

[*Gives it to* EUGENIA, *and exit.*

Eug. Ah! the post-mark Vienna. Bad news, I fear.

Car. So I think: it was from Vienna that letter came the other day.

Eug. Which affected her so violently, she has never looked cheerful since. Did you observe, Carronade, how she changed colour when she read it?

Car. Dear lady! yes, I did—I made observation of her countenance; and when I saw her eyes grow hazy, as a body may say, I felt a thumping in my breast, and, as my foolish heart always answers signals, 'faith I wept too.

Eug. It was at Vienna the countess was married to her present husband, Count Belfior—

Car. Yes, madam, it was at Vienna she married your brother; I have heard the whole story. She had lately become a widow—her first husband died in prison, where, by all accounts, he deserved to die for his ill treatment of his wife. D'ye see, it was always my belief, that when woman was first launched into the world, man was appointed her convoy through life; and if her natural protector turns pirate, and becomes her enemy, he must sooner or later be brought to a court-martial, where his accuser will be conscience, and from whose sentence there is no appeal.

Eug. See—the countess approaches—how unhappy she appears to be—affection impels me to fly to her—yet, alas! what consolation can I offer, who can only judge of the acuteness of that sorrow, which will admit no sharer in its pangs. Mysterious as her conduct appears, I am sure she is undeserving of calamity. [*Exit.*

Car. Ah! dear lady!—I wish her heart was light as mine—but she has never been to sea as I have—Old Care never dares make his appearance on board a ship.

SONG.—CARRONADE.

I.

For many a year I have follow'd the sea,
With a heart as light as light could be,
In storm or calm—in peace or war,
I whistled away old Care afar.
Within my breast there is stowage, d'ye see,
For friendship, love, and loyalty;
But, old Care, there is no room for thee.
Toll de roll, &c.

II.

Ah! fair was the day, and smiling the sky,
With a heart so light when I set sail,
No other sport on earth found I,
Where liberty's peerless joys prevail.
So, as I'm a part of his majesty's store,
To England I'll return once more,
And till death defend my native shore.
Toll de roll, &c.

Enter EUGENIA, *with the* COUNTESS.

Countess Bel. From Vienna, did you say?

Eug. Yes, dear countess, from Vienna.

Countess Bel. It will decide my fate—give it to me.

[*She breaks the seal, and appears fearful at opening it.* (*Aside.*) Why does my heart beat with such violence—I ought to be sufficiently accustomed to misfortunes—away with this weakness—let me read the letter.

[*She looks for the signature; and runs her eye hastily over the letter, shewing signs of affright, and interrupting the reading by exclamations.* Heavens! Can I credit the evidence of my senses! There is no friendly hand to save me.

Car. No friend!—What, madam, is not your faithful Carronade here!—Did not my master, when he went to the wars, bid me to guard and protect you, the dearest treasure of his heart! Such a charge is enough to make me proud—and if I am presuming——

Countess Bel. Faithful fellow!

Car. I know a weather-beaten tar is not a fit confidant for a noble lady like you——but your anguish seems extreme—it pierces my heart—it does indeed—but I am too bold—I perceive I am—I ask pardon.

Countess Bel. My heart feels and acknowledges your kindness.

Car. Does it?—Do you indeed approve the humble efforts of my duty? Lady, I am a Briton, and a seaman, whom dishonour has never stained; and I am proud to add—I am honoured with the regard of your husband.

Countess Bel. My husband!—What husband?

Car. What husband! Your lord—the noble Count Belfior, my honoured master, who is hourly expected.

Countess Bel. Expected—is he?—yes—he is hourly expected—my heart will break.

Eug. Good heavens! there is distraction in your looks—I implore you to relieve your mind—Carronade, the countess will send for you anon—Leave us, I entreat you.

Car. Very well—if I must, I must; but I shall take care to be within hail, and if you chuse to hoist a signal, I'll bear down to assist you. [*Exit.*

Countess Bel. Eugenia, you look upon me as the happy wife of your brother, my beloved Belfior—Alas!—how shall I explain—how shall I utter the dreadful truth! My first husband, of whose death I had the strongest proofs, is still living.

Eug. Still living!

Countess Bel. Yes—the letter I received lately from Vienna gave me but too much reason to fear it. This confirms my misfortune.

Eug. (*Reading.*) "With regret, I confirm to you, my dear Eliza, that Isidore Fritz, whom we thought dead eight years ago, and who, during that period, has been confined in the prison at Vienna, is still living—he has made his escape. This unfortunate news cannot be doubted—I myself met him a league from the city."

Countess Bel. Is not the wrath of heaven yet appeased?

Eug. And this man—the subject of your friend's letter, is——

Countess Bel. Yes—this wretch—the author of all my miseries—is my husband.

Eug. But how is this possible? When Count Belfior met you at Vienna, every one believed you to be a widow.

Countess Bel. I thought myself so.

Eug. You say you possessed proofs of your former husband's death.

Countess Bel. I have them still in my possession.

Eug. I thought I had known your whole story, but I find——

Countess Bel. Alas! Eugenia, you have not heard the whole of my story yet—a part has hitherto remained a secret, known only to heaven.

Eug. I had heard, that your father, retired from the fatigues of a military life, had settled at Munich; when you, at the age of fifteen years, became acquainted with a profligate young man of imposing address, who, aided by the perfidy of a female friend, persuaded you to elope with him, and to marry him privately.

Countess Bel. Accursed be that hour!

Eug. That you wrote to your father, apprizing him of your marriage, and suing for pardon—that his answer anounced his curses for your undutiful conduct; and that, resolving to see you no more, he had quitted Munich for ever: that, on your return thither, you could gain no intelligence of your father; and that your husband, thus losing all hope of the fortune he had expected with you, threw off the mask, and treated you——

Countess Bel. Not merely with neglect, but brutality.

Eug. At length you secretly quitted your unworthy husband, accompanied by your infant son——

Countess Bel. That son! Ah, Eugenia, do not let

a whisper escape of what I confided to you. Yes, after six years passed in poverty and wretchedness with him, whose vices rendered him my abhorrence, I learned by chance that my father, reduced by misfortunes to a bare subsistence, had settled near Vienna. Animated by the dearest hope of my life, that of obtaining a parent's pardon, I hastened to his humble dwelling, and threw myself at his feet.

Eug. And he forgave you?

Countess Bel. No.—The wretched old man, a prey to disappointment, age, and infirmities (for he was become blind,) forbade me his presence, and renewed his curses on my disobedience.

Eug. That was indeed too hard!

Countess Bel. I humbled myself before afflicting heaven, and resolved that, though I should not obtain my father's forgiveness, I would at least endeavour to deserve it—By depriving myself of part of that pittance which my industry gained, I succeeded in administering by stealth to a parent's comforts—it was my reward to behold him every day. Deprived of sight, little did he think that the daughter whom he had overwhelmed with maledictions was his protector.

Eug. Be comforted, dearest sister—The count is ignorant of this fatal secret.

Countess Bel. True—but it must be revealed to him; and when he shall learn that Fritz is still in existence, will he not suspect me of having abused his unbounded confidence in my affection, to obtain the benefits he has showered upon me. Then, to find myself accused of dissimulation, meanness, ingratitude!—Oh, I cannot support it.

Enter THEODORE.

Well, Theodore.

Theo. Madam! Madam! the count is arrived—though, do you know, he had been detained by the banditti in the forest.

Countess Bel. Detained by the banditti!

Theo. Yes, but he is safe, I assure you.

Countess Bel. Thank heaven he is so!

Theo. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

Countess Bel. Indeed I shall, Theodore, (*Aside.*) yet I tremble at the idea of meeting him.

Theo. My dear Eugenia, a word with you—Rosalia and I have contrived such a pretty dance to receive the count—and we are to sing too, and—but I must run and hasten every body to get ready—You look grave, madam—I hope you are not angry with me—but, indeed, I can't help being a little out of my wits for joy.—Good bye, Eugenia—I am sure you'll like our dance.—(*To the Countess.*) What, madam, still serious!—not one little smile for the poor orphan you have protected—but you don't love him now—I see it but too plainly.

SONG.—THEODORE.

I.

The other day when I was dancing,
To the air you love so well,
And with the rosy wreath advancing,
At your feet the offering fell;
A sigh your woe betraying,
O'erpower'd the smile you strove to give,
While in vain to speak essaying—
Ah could I your griefs relieve!—
But alas! you love me not:
No, no, poor Theodore's forgot.

II.

Oh! let me hope to see reviving
All the gaiety you knew;
When for your kind attention striving,
I was ever in your view.

My childish sports approving,
My trifling oft your cares beguiled;
Still on your brow no frown reproving,
You on your little orphan smiled.
But alas! &c. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.

The Park, near the COUNT BELFIOR'S *Castle.*

In the middle of the wall, which runs across the bottom of the Stage, is an iron railing, which occupies almost the whole breadth of the Stage.

Enter the COUNT *and* COUNTESS, *followed by* EUGENIA.

Count Bel. This hour, my Eliza, compensates for all I have suffer'd in your absence.

Countess Bel. Long and cruel has that absence been, my beloved Edward, but it could not have the power to change your heart—nor did I ever fear it.

Count Bel. No, my love—ours is not that giddy passion—the slave of caprice, to which confidence is unknown—Mutual esteem sanctioned the choice of love, and heaven recorded the vows of hearts purified by virtue.—But where is my friend and companion?

Countess Bel. Indeed I long to be made acquainted with his virtues.

Count Bel. Armagh!

Enter ARMAGH.

Arm. Your honour.

Count Bel. Allow me, my dear Eliza, to present to you Serjeant Armagh; an honest man and a good soldier.

Countess Bel. Your letters, my lord, have already prepared me to esteem him.

Count Bel. Let me add, that to him I owe my life—I was lying wounded in the field of battle—a French hussar marked me as his prize—already was his uplifted sabre ready to descend on my neck, and I had uttered a short prayer for you, when this brave fellow threw himself before my enemy, and saved me.

Arm. Ah, now, my lord—pray say no more about it—by my soul, a man never looks so foolish as when he hears his own praises. To be sure I am not apt to be sheepish, but really it is rather hard when one has done a good-natured action, that one should be reproached with it ever afterwards.

Countess Bel. You are a native of Ireland, I think?—is it long since you were at home?

Arm. To say the truth, madam, my countrymen are so domestic, that whenever we are abroad, we always find ourselves at home.

Countess Bel. But do not you long to revisit your own country?

Arm. Ah, that I do! He who does not love the country that gave him birth, before all others in the world, is no better than a bastard—I beg pardon—I mean a natural child—no—not a natural child—I mean an unnatural child—no, I mean—but I am a child of nature myself, and so you must excuse me.

Count Bel. Ha! ha! ha!—we know your meaning, honest Armagh, without further explanation.

Arm. I am glad you do, your honour; for though I can very easily get the meaning of any thing into

my head, the devil burn me if I can get it out again —But I was going to tell you, madam, that in dear little Ireland I had a cabin—it was but a small cabin—but I liked it better than my father's great big farm in the neighbourhood.

Countess Bel. The cabin was your own?

Arm. That was it!—that was the reason I liked it so well—but my father's farm was a fine place—it was worth going to Ireland to see it.—The way to it was straight up a circular road—If you once got in at one end, you could not miss your way to the other.—He had a piggory and two cows—oh! St Patrick, what a dairy we had!—we made the most elegant butter in all Connaught.—It was there I first fell in love.

Countess Bel. Are you married?

Arm. Not at present, madam, that I know of—I have, indeed, been several times in the happy state of matrimony, but I always made it a point of honour never to marry a second wife till the first had made a fair vacancy.

[*Pipe and Tabor, &c. are heard without.*

Eh! what do I hear?

Count Bel Some agreeable surprise from your old friend Carronade, I guess.

Countess Bel. I believe you guess aright, dear Edward.

Enter CARRONADE.

Car. There they are—the whole neighbourhood—men, women, and children—all come to give your honour joy of your safe arrival.—Oh! what a day is this—to see happy faces all around one—it reminds me of the king's birth-day in England.——Now for my speech. God bless your honour—and may your honour, and your ladyship's honour, and—and both your honours.—There now!—I had made as fine a speech, loaded with choice words of all sorts—round,

grape, and langridge——but I don't know how it is —I can't let off—so there's an end of my study.

Count Bel. Thanks, my faithful Carronade, for your pains however.

Enter THEODORE.

Well, Theodore—where is your speech ?—you have not studied in vain too, have you ?

Theo My lord, no study is required when the heart speaks ; and your kindness, while it has taught my heart to speak, has commanded my tongue to be silent.

Car. Come, Theodore,—you must not cast anchor here—Come—make sail—away, away.

[*Exeunt* CAR. *and* THEO.

Arm. By my soul that is a fine boy—I should like to know who he is.—I presume this amiable youth is the son of one of your ladyship's tenants ?

Countess Bel. No, he is——

Count Bel. He is an orphan whom the countess patronises.

Arm. Oh, I have done—I understand.—Sometimes poor folks get children and rich folks keep 'em. It happens in all countries.

Countess Bel. (*To the Count.*) My dear Edward, why so thoughtful on a sudden ?

Arm. Oh ! I can explain it—I'll bet my father's farm to a Dublin rapp halfpenny, that his honour at this moment is thinking of that ill-looking dog who stopped us at the entrance of the forest.

Countess Bel. One of the banditti ?

Arm. No—no—before we met the banditti.

Count Bel. Armagh, no more—why recall the cause for a moment's inquietude ?

Countess Bel. And why inquietude ?—Tell me, my dear Edward, what is the circumstance to which you allude ?

Count Bel. A trifle, not worth remembering.

Countess Bel. Tell me, I conjure you, by your affection.

Count Bel. You shall know all—After disembarking, I left my servants to come on with the baggage, whilst I undertook to pilot my companion a nearer way through the forest.—Scarcely had we entered the wood, when a man, whose figure and appearance bespoke extreme poverty and misery, rushed from a thicket, and roughly demanded whether he was far from the Count Belfior's castle.

Countess Bel. (*Aside.*) Ah! should it be that wretch!

Count Bel. Behold the Count Belfior, I replied. What would you with him?—He started, and frowning on me—Is it you who, eight years ago, married a widow named——

Countess Bel. Ah! my lord—was that one of the robbers?

Count Bel. I know not.—Astonished at this address, Why, answered I, do you thus dare to question me?—"You shall know hereafter," he cried, in a menacing tone—"Adieu—we shall soon meet again."

Countess Bel. (*Aside.*) Powers of mercy!

Count Bel. He then quitted me hastily—I called to him, he fled—I pursued in vain—he darted amidst the thickest of the forest, where I could not follow him. But the impression which his figure, his manner, his voice made on my mind will never be forgotten—he seems ever before me.

(FRITZ *appears through the paling, and observes what is passing.—The Countess, who is anxiously watching the Count, follows him with her eyes, till she turns towards the bottom of the stage, and suddenly perceives* FRITZ.—*She shrieks, and swoons in* ARMAGH'S *arms.*—FRITZ *disappears.*)

Count Bel. Heavens!—Help instantly—Eliza, my love, my wife, look upon me.

Countess Bel. (*Recovering.*) I am better, I am quite well—I—(*Looking cautiously to the spot where she had seen* FRITZ.) I am indeed. Pardon my weakness, dear Edward, but the tale you have told overpowered my feelings.

Arm. By my soul, my feelings are overpowered too—I would have catched the thief myself, only I was encumbered with a horse under me. But now I am upon my own feet again, I should like to hunt the villain.—What say ye, my lord, shall we beat the cover round the castle, and bring him in dead or alive?

Countess Bel. Oh! no! Let me never see this wretch—suffer him to escape—Keep him from my sight—'tis all I ask.

Arm. Ah, lady, don't baulk us in our pious undertaking—by my soul, scoundrel-hunting is a noble chace. I wish, for the benefit of society, we could make it fashionable.

Count Bel. (*To* ARMAGH.) Moderate your zeal, my friend—let us bury in oblivion every idea that can give pain to my beloved Eliza. (*Pipe and tabor, &c. without.*) See, my love, the peasants approach to greet us—their honest joy may inspire you with cheerfulness.

Enter CARRONADE.

Car. There, my lord, look there—did you ever see a prettier line of battle—and all ready to bear down on you the moment I make a signal; for I am their high-admiral—and here is one of my repeating frigates—little merry Ninetta.

Enter NINETTA.

Count Bel. Well, Ninetta, now for your speech.

Nin. Take my song if you please, my lord, that is more in my way.

SONG.—NINETTA.

I.

On the high and snowy mountains born,
A Savoyard am I;
To the wide world was I cast forlorn,
My fortune there to try.
Whilst of my lute and of my simple songs possest,
For wealth I care not, no not I,
Whilst hope with smiles cheers my breast.

II.

Little had I when I was at home,
So little left behind,
And quite content am I to roam;
Though little more I find.
Whilst of my lute, &c.

Car. Now for our dancing—Come, my lads and lasses.

Enter THEODORE *followed by peasants, who express their joy at the Count's return, and conclude the act with a dance.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Terrace belonging to the Castle on the borders of a Lake. The Mountain is seen on the right at a distance.

Enter EUGENIA, NINETTA, *and* THEODORE.

TRIO.

Haste, glorious light, with golden ray,
Deck with thy smiles the infant day.
Roseate morn, at thy smiles
What delight does nature prove!
But dearer far to me
Are the smiles of him I love.
Have ye heard the huntsman's horn?
No, not yet has it hailed the breeze of morn,
Hark, 'tis the horn.

Theo. Yes, the sound of the horn seems to approach. The countess is returning from the chace. [*Exit.*

Eug. Is there no other cause, I wonder, for Theodore's anxiety, than his disappointment at the countess not returning so soon as expected? I think his heart is too susceptible not to have felt a tender im-

pression.—Yes, certainly some of the pretty lasses in the neighbourhood have taught him to bow before the universal sway. Or is it, that, conscious myself of the sweet tormenting passion, I look upon every one around me with suspicion?—Heigho! Love is so universal a conqueror, that 'tis merely folly to oppose him.

SONG.—EUGENIA.

When conquering love assails the heart,
Alas! what can withstand the foe!
Let Prudence preach, let Reason frown,
Nought can avail—ah! no! no! [*Exit.*

Re-enter THEODORE.

Theo. How I am disappointed—The countess is certainly gone the other way to the castle.

As THEODORE *is going towards the castle,* FRITZ *and* WALTER *enter down the steps of the terrace, and come behind him.*

Fritz. Young man.

Theo. Dear sir, you frighten me.

Fritz. Fear nothing—we will do you no harm.

Theo. What is it you would have, gentlemen?

Fritz. Go to the countess—tell her a poor traveller, who awaits her here, has information to disclose important to her welfare.

Theo. Very well, I will do so—(*Aside.*) A poor traveller! They say one should not trust to appearances, and therefore I will not guess uncharitably. (*Going.*)

Fritz. Stop a moment. (*Aside.*) The more I look at him——

Theo. Pray let me be gone.—I am in haste.

Fritz. What is your name?

Theo. (*Aside.*) He is very curious—(*To* FRITZ.) I should think my name cannot be interesting to you.

Fritz. It is plain we do not think so.

Theo. Well, gentlemen, adieu—I shall fulfil your commission.

Fritz. Stay, I command you. (WALTER *stops him.*)

Theo. How you speak to me, sir! I assure you I am not accustomed to be treated thus.

Fritz. I have a right to speak to you thus—ear me, and answer directly—don't equivocate.

Theo. I scorn equivocation.

Fritz. Your name?

Theo. Theodore.

Fritz. Your age?

Theo. Near fifteen.

Fritz. Your parents?

Theo. I have none.

Fritz. None!

Theo. Alas! I knew them not.—Can you inform me, sir, who they were?

Fritz. How long have you resided in this castle?

Theo. I came hither with the countess.

Fritz. Then you were not born in this country?

Theo. No, in Bavaria, as I am told.

Fritz. (*Aside.*) It is he! not a doubt remains—Who has brought you up?

Theo. The countess. Having lost my parents at an early age, her ladyship was so good as to educate me.

Fritz. So good indeed!—Does the count, too, give you proofs of his goodness?

Theo. He behaves to me with affection.—But, sir, may I not, without offence, inquire what interest can induce you to put all these questions?

Fritz. What interest!—yours.

Theo. Mine!

Fritz. Yes—what will you think of her whose benevolence you praise, when you know, that, having a son, for whom she need not blush, she excludes him from the brilliant rank in which fortune has placed her.—She involves his birth in mystery, and shuts her heart against her own offspring.

Theo. The Countess Belfior is incapable of such conduct.

Fritz. I will prove it to you—Her son, of whom I speak, is now before me.

Theo. Before you!

Fritz. Yes—it is yourself.

Theo. Oh, you wou'd impose upon me.

Fritz. I say the Countess Belfior is your mother—I know the fact.—Her happiness demands that it should remain unknown. You are now master of the secret, and you may make your own use of it.

Theo. What, to afflict her!—to render her unhappy—could I be so ungrateful!—But who are you, sir, who thus have the cruelty to disturb the happiness of one who never offended you?

Fritz. Go, take my message to the countess, and forget not that you must speak to her in private.

Theo. Yet explain—

Fritz. Begone.

Theo. A word in pity—

Fritz. Hereafter I will explain, but now obey me.

Theo. The countess my mother! Can it indeed be so?—Oh, if I desire to prove it true, it is that I may acquire a right to love her still more dearly.

[*Exit.*

Fritz. You seem astonished, comrade.

Wal. I am indeed, comrade—I do not understand what service I am to perform, nor how my reward is to arise.

Fritz. You are to assist me, in case I should find any difficulty in taking possession of this estate which belongs to me.

Wal. This estate your's! I hope you'll prove it

true; but how, then, can the estate belong to the countess?

Fritz. She is my wife.

Wal. The countess your wife!

Fritz. Yes—she is that Eliza Werner whom I told you I married sixteen years ago.

Wal. But how does it happen that she is now married to another?

Fritz. I, myself, contrived the marriage—having deceived her by forged proofs of my death.—I had heard of the count's great wealth, and thought I might profit by it.—But see, she approaches—be near enough to overhear our conversation—and be ready to come forward in a moment, if I should make a sign for your assistance—Retire. [*Exit* WAL.

Enter the COUNTESS.

Countess Bel. This is the place where Theodore informed me I was to meet the stranger.—Ah! (*perceiving* FRITZ.) What do I see!

Fritz. One whose sudden appearance seems to give you great satisfaction.

Countess Bel. Is it possible!

Fritz. Extremely well!—exhibit surprise, astonishment! despair!—all this is to be expected after your conduct.

Countess Bel. My conduct!

Fritz. Are you not the wife of another?

Countess Bel. Did not the proofs I received of—

Fritz. The plot is well imagined, I confess, but, remember, I am not to be duped by it.

Countess Bel. What do you mean?

Fritz. I mean, that you, informed, no doubt, of the unfortunate cause of my imprisonment, and flattering yourself that I could not escape death, contrived this ingenious tale, and fabricated these pretended proofs, that you might in security resign yourself to your new attachment.

Countess Bel. Horrible accusation!

Fritz. But the courts of justice shall resound with my wrongs.

Countess Bel. Sir!

Fritz. There your perfidy shall be proclaimed, and you condemned to punishment—despised by your illustrious husband, whom you have deceived——

Countess Bel. No—I have never deceived him—I never will; and if I hesitate for a moment to throw myself at his feet, and avow my wretched fate, it is because I cannot resolve to wound that benevolent heart which never imagined evil against any one.

Fritz. You fear for him, smooth dissembler!—you do not fear for yourself?

Countess Bel. No—I know my doom. Adversity has inured me to misfortune, and conscious innocence will enable me to bear it. One event alone can shed a faint gleam of comfort on my remaining days—my poor father still survives—but he has never forgiven my disobedience in marrying you.—Grant me but a short respite, that I may once more sue for his mercy.

Fritz. My claims must be preferred instantly.

Countess Bel. Do not yet kill him with your presence—he cannot long survive this discovery.—Let me have his blessing before he dies.—Consent to leave me—I beg on my knees—I supplicate you—in mercy hear me. (*Kneeling.*)

Fritz. I will not listen to you.

Enter EUGENIA *from the Castle.*

Eug. The countess! Heavens! she is in sorrow!——perhaps in danger!——Help! help! (*Calling.*)

Wal. (*Comes forward.*) Be silent.

Countess Bel. Eugenia—hush!—my friend, you will ruin me; (*To* FRITZ.) consent to go while it is in your power—another moment, and it may be too late.

Fritz. Yes, I go; for I now see I must prepare against the worst; but within an hour expect to see me again.

[*Exeunt* FRITZ *and* WALTER *up the steps of the terrace.*

Countess Bel. Protector of the guiltless, in thee I trust!

Eug. My beloved sister, how is it with you?

Countess Bel. Well, my dear Eugenia, I am once more myself. Let the storm come—the sacred wreath of innocence shall bind my brows—the lightning will not harm me.

Eug. The wretch who just now left you has seen Theodore—has he discovered to the poor youth——

Countess Bel. I fear it—but of that I must be informed—Appoint Theodore to meet me in the castle instantly.

Eug. And what will you explain to him?

Countess Bel. I know not yet—the moment must decide—I feel myself inspired with courage, which I hail as the auspicious omen of success. I am resolved to attempt this day once more to obtain my father's pardon.

Eug. Your father's pardon!—Is he then still living?

Countess Bel. Yes, and living on this estate—I have never yet explained to my beloved Belfior that Maurice is the Baron Werner, my father. If I fail in obtaining the pardon of a parent, Belfior shall never know the secret; but if he blesses me with his forgiveness——

Eug. He cannot refuse it. But how did this strange event occur?

Countess Bel. As the Countess Belfior, I presented to him a farm, which now became mine.—He offered excuses—I would hear of none—and I succeeded in possessing, in beholding every hour, but without daring to speak to him, that parent whose anger I

have deserved, but for whose happiness I would gladly sacrifice my existence.

Eug. Angel as you are, Heaven will never desert you. See, the venerable Maurice approaches!

Countess Bel. My father!—Oh, Eugenia, my boasted fortitude sinks before his presence—I must retire to regain that temper of mind from which alone I may expect success. [*Exit.*

Enter WERNER, *leaning on* THEODORE'S *arm, followed by* NINETTA.

Theo. You must be weary, good Maurice, lean on my arm—you won't hurt me—you have walked a long way.

Wer. Yes, dear Theodore, but it seemed a very short distance—the hope of meeting my worthy patron, the noble Count Belfior, supported me—I felt no weariness till now I am disappointed of that satisfaction.

Eug. (*Coming forward.*) But you will soon have that satisfaction—the count has returned from the chace earlier than usual, that he might walk to the farm, and see all your improvements, Maurice. I dare say he will be there as soon as you.

Wer. I hope the cottage is decorated neatly to receive so illustrious a guest—You know, Ninetta, I am blind, and cannot attend to all this as I could wish.

Nin. Yes, it is indeed, sir—and Theodore has hung your sword over the fire-place.

Wer. Good boy—that was kind—Theodore, you shall have that sword at my death—it is all I have to leave you—this arm once could wield it—it has done service in its time—it has been drawn in the defence of my country.

Theo. I assure you, Maurice, your sword looks very handsome—I have polished the hilt—but the blade is so rusty—

Wer. Yes, and I remember well the cause; I wept

over it when I lost my daughter—my sword was the only remaining mark of honour left to me.

Theo. Don't think of that loss, Maurice, it always makes you so melancholy.

Wer. I won't, I won't: I ought to lose the remembrance of my own misfortunes in the joy of hailing Count Belfior's return. I will be cheerful—I will indeed, Theodore.

Theo. Eugenia wishes to speak to me—you won't take it unkind if I now leave you to the care of Ninetta—you know she is very attentive to you.

Wer. She is—she is—and so are you—and so is the countess—you are all kind to me except my own child—but I will be cheerful, Theodore, indeed I will.

[*Exeunt* WERNER *and* NINETTA, THEODORE *and* EUGENIA, *severally.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in the Castle.

Enter EUGENIA *and* THEODORE.

Eug. Theodore, the countess wishes to meet you here immediately.

Theo. The countess—why does she desire me to meet her?

Eug. She will be alone.

Theo. And alone!—Oh! my throbbing heart—Eugenia, if you love me, ease my anxious mind—

I am on the rack of expectation—Who are my parents?

Eug. Theodore, you know I love and esteem you.

Theo. Then in pity tell——

Eug. I would most willingly tell you any thing I know, and ought to reveal—but if I am ignorant——

Theo. You are not ignorant—you will not say so.

Eug. Adieu—Remember your appointment with the countess.

Theo. Eugenia——

Eug. Theodore——

DUETT.—EUGENIA *and* THEODORE.

Theo. How can you thus cruel the secret conceal'ing,
The proof I implore of affection deny?
Your love then revealing,
With kindness reply.

Eug. Dear Theodore, spare me—my love while possessing,
Such false proofs of friendship why will you demand,
Thus vainly distressing
The heart you command?

Theo. And yet what I ask, to entreaty debarr'd.

Eug. My honour forbids me your suit to regard.

Theo. Ah why thus resisting!
You must not deny.

Eug. In vain thus persisting,
I dare not comply. [*Exit* EUGENIA.

Enter the COUNTESS.

Countess Bel. What shall I say to Theodore, should he be informed of the fatal secret?—Theodore—

Theo. Madam.

Countess Bel. Theodore, I would speak with you.

Theo. (*Aside.*) I tremble with expectation—What will she say to me?

Countess Bel. (*With emotion.*) Theodore, you are

confused, embarrassed: what is the cause?—why do you shrink from my presence with this timid air?—why are your eyes cast down?—raise them—look upon me—you know I ever look upon you with pleasure.

Theo. (*With tenderness and timidity.*) Indeed, madam, is it really so?

Countess Bel. What, Theodore?

Theo. That—that—you look upon me with pleasure.

Countess Bel. Have you any reason to doubt me?

Theo. I do not say so—but—

Countess Bel. Has any one told you—

Theo. (*Forgetting himself.*) Yes, madam, I have been told such a dear delightful piece of news.

Countess Bel. (*Aside.*) He knows all: (*To him.*) yet this intelligence gives you much trouble.

Theo. Yes, for I cannot believe that I am indeed so very, very happy.

Countess Bel. (*Aside.*) Poor child!

Theo. I fear you may be angry, and I would not for the world offend my dear, dear mother—(*Recollecting himself.*) my benefactress.

Countess Bel. What can you think of your benefactress, if you believe she will not rejoice in every cause for your happiness?

Theo. Forgive me, oh forgive me, my heart is very, very full.

Countess Bel. Take courage, Theodore; proceed.

Theo. (*Turning his eyes away from her.*) I have been assured that my mother, who I believed was no more, still lives.

Countess Bel. And doubtless she has been represented to you in the most odious colours.

Theo. The mother who can stifle the voice of Nature, and hesitate to acknowledge her child, must have strong motives indeed for so painful a sacrifice.—Duty forbids me to accuse her who gave me birth.

Countess Bel. Noble-minded boy! (*Aside.*)

Theo. Ah, madam! would to Heaven that I had indeed a mother—that I could behold her—be admitted to her presence, as I am now admitted to yours—thus would I throw myself at her feet. (*Falls on his knees.*)

Countess Bel. (*Agitated.*) Theodore, what mean you?

Theo. I would whisper to her—My mother—look on your son—behold his eyes suffused with love and tenderness. Hitherto you have with-held your caresses from me. Alas! you have not known your poor Theodore—oh let him prove his affection for you! Punish him no longer for a fault of which he is guiltless. Give him the only inheritance he wishes to claim—the only treasure that belongs to him—give him your heart.

Countess Bel. Theodore!

Theo. What mother could resist the voice of nature? Mine would open her arms to me.

Countess Bel. My child, my child—(*Embracing him.*)

Theo. Am I indeed your child?

Countess Bel. Yes; I wished to conceal from you this fatal secret, the bane of your repose; but maternal tenderness tears it from my bosom.—Yes, you shall know all.

Theo. No, my mother—I wish to know no more than that I have regained a parent, that she presses me to her breast, and that I am happy.

Countess Bel. Theodore, you must have no reason to accuse me. You ought to know the motives which have decided me to conceal your birth in mystery, otherwise I might appear to you culpable—and I would have no reason to blush in the presence of my son. The person who spoke to you this morning in the park—that unhappy man, clad in the garb of wretchedness—

Theo. Yes, who is that man?

Countess Bel. He is—

Theo. Who?

Countess Bel. Your father.

Theo. Is he my father?

Countess Bel. You will now recollect how oft maternal tenderness has been on the point of wresting from my heart the secret of your birth; but I feared to destroy the precious illusion which formed your felicity, and perhaps mine: I feared that my son might curse the bonds by which nature attached him to me, when he should learn that he owes his birth to a being overwhelmed with crimes—lost to shame.

Theo. Alas! my mother!

Countess Bel. Yes, Theodore, your father is—oh, if you knew—but some one approaches—we must separate.

Theo. What, without one embrace?

Countess Bel. (*Embracing him.*) Bless you, my child: adieu, dear Theodore; continue your attentions to poor Maurice—I shall love you the better for it. [*Exeunt severally.*

Enter CARRONADE.

Car. Now, if I can persuade Ninetta to share my fortunes, and accompany me to my native country—Ninetta! (*Calling.*)

Enter NINETTA.

Nin. Well, are all the dancing and singing folks ready to receive our good master at the farm?

Car. Yes, and I want you to make one among 'em; so go, ask leave of old Maurice.

Nin. With all my heart; I love to be among the merriest.

Car. And shall you be merry when I have left you, Ninetta?

Nin. Why, you are not going to leave us?

Car. Yes, I am, very soon: I am going to Eng-

land; 'tis a charming country: will you go with me?

Nin. There are two words to that bargain.

Car. I only want one—say yes.

DUETT.—CARRONADE *and* NINETTA.

I.

Car. In fairness I speak—from my heart comes the offer,
Then say, sweet lass, with a sailor will you roam?

Nin. I thank you, good sir, for the kindness you proffer;
But say, kind sir, suppose I stay at home.

Car. On board a man of war you'll taste every pleasure.

Nin. But joys, you'll remember, we variously measure.

Both. The question is plain { shall I / will you } stay or { shall I / will you } go?
The answer is plain, 'tis merely yes or no.
Fall la, &c.

II.

Car. Two words to the bargain!—be it so, if you like it.
My word is yes—and may yours be the same.

Nin. Why, as to the bargain—we never shall strike it.
My word is no—the plain answer you claim.

Car. Plain dealing I admire—that yours is sincerely.

Nin. It leaves you free to chuse a lass to love dearly.

Both. Tho' lovers we're none—yet as friends let us part;
A hand you may give—tho' you can't bestow a heart.
Fall la, &c.

SCENE III.

The Interior of the Farm.

The Front of the Stage represents a Court inclosed by a Paling, in the middle of which is a Gate; within the Court are Trees, &c., and small Buildings belonging to the Farm. Beyond the Paling the Country is discovered.

Enter the COUNT, *leading* WERNER *through the Gate, followed by a Peasant.*

Count Bel. Believe me, my good Maurice, I am most happy to see you; but, infirm as you are, why did you think it necessary to seek me so far from the farm? The distance is too much for you.

Wer. My lord the count is very good; but not having yet had the honour of receiving him here for six years, not since her ladyship gave me this farm, I thought it my duty to be one of the first who should offer my humble congratulations.

Count Bel. (*To the Peasant.*) Bring me that chair. (*The peasant brings the chair, and goes off at the gate.*) Be seated, good Maurice.

Wer. Excuse me, my lord.

Count Bel. Indeed, I am very happy to find you are so well satisfied with your situation.

Wer. Ah, my good lord—blessed in the protection

of the estimable Countess Belfior, have I not reason to thank Heaven for my lot?—I must give vent to my full heart—I must tell you of all her goodness to me.

Count Bel. Go on, honest Maurice—delight me with the recital.

Wer. The year after you went to the army, my lord, when her ladyship came hither to reside, a fever consumed the little strength which my misfortunes had left me. That woman, or rather that protecting angel, not content with calling to my assistance every succour that art could afford, visited me herself at the farm—nay, she took up her abode there, to attend me in person.

Count Bel. And her kind attentions assisted your recovery?

Wer. Yes—When at length the crisis of my malady seemed to announce the period of my days, this excellent woman, bathing with tears my trembling, emaciated hands, which she pressed with anxiety, "Good old man," she cried, "My father! live—live, to form the happiness of those around you."—Ah, sir! that interesting voice, which recalled to my fading memory ideas of one whose soul is, alas! so different—it penetrated my heart—it restored me to that existence which I thenceforth consecrated to gratitude—to my benefactress.

Enter THEODORE *and* CARRONADE.

Car. I beg pardon, but, with all deference, I do not think we ought to celebrate the count's safe return with tears. I should presume, if his lordship were to take a cruize around the park and the gardens, to see the improvements—

Count Bel. Well, my good Carronade, I believe you are in the right—It shall be so.

Car. (*To* THEODORE.) Is every thing prepared to surprise his lordship agreeably?

Theo. Yes—every thing is ready.

Wer. I hope your lordship will do me the honour to examine what improvements have been made in the farm.

Count Bel. Yes, my good Maurice—and, on my return, I must have some talk with you—we are brother soldiers you know—you shall delight and instruct me with tales of conquest—I will soon visit you again—Adieu, good Maurice—Come, Carronade.

[*Exeunt* COUNT BEL. *and* CARRONADE.

Wer. Ninetta——

Theo. Ninetta will return presently—but I am here, good Maurice.

Wer. Ah! my faithful Theodore—are we alone?

Theo. Yes.

Wer. Then sing to me the song I taught you.

Theo. Why must I sing it now?—That song always feeds your sorrow.

Wer. It sooths the wounded mind to indulge melancholy sometimes—Give me my humour but for a while—I shall soon be cheerful again—Sing, my kind boy—sing.

Enter the COUNTESS *behind.*

SONG.—THEODORE.

I.

A soldier to his own fire-side
With laurels was retiring:
An only daughter was his pride;
His every hope inspiring.
In her young mind the virtues shone;
Th' admiring world approved her:
She seemed to live for him alone,
And he as his own life loved her.

II.

But oft within the fairest flower,
The canker worm is working.
Ingratitude—ah! fatal hour!
In her false heart was lurking.

The spoiler came—she ope'd the door,
He from her home remov'd her:
She of that father thought no more,
Who as his own life loved her.

III.

Behold the wretched parent's look!
His child was lost for ever:
The tear his phrenzied eye forsook:
From life he seem'd to sever.
Oft did he heave the bitter sigh,
Yet not a word reproved her:
But all he wish'd for was to die;
For as his life he loved her.

(*The* COUNTESS, *who has attentively watched the effect of the Song on* WERNER, *has, near the end of it, taken out her pocket-book, and written, with a pencil, on a leaf which she now tears out, and gives to* THEODORE, *making signs to him to sing what she has written.*)

Wer. Thanks, Theodore—many thanks.

Theo. Wait a while—here is another verse of the song.

Wer. Another verse! How!—What mean ye?

Theo. It is an additional verse which the countess gave me—and if you please, I will sing it.

Wer. The countess gave it you!—then let me hear it.

THEODORE *sings.*

With guilty pangs her bosom torn,
Still lives the wretched daughter,
And long repentant woe has borne,
To which her error brought her.
Oh! bring the hour of mercy near!
The eye of Heaven has proved her,
As life to love that father dear,
Who as his own life loved her.

Wer. No more—no more.

[*The* COUNTESS *speaks aside to* THEODORE, *and he goes out.*

The kind heart of the countess has been imposed upon—I am displeased at this.

Enter NINETTE.

Nin. If you please, Maurice, I want to go and look after the fine doings they are preparing for the count's reception.

Wer. No, no—stay with me—I must have this circumstance explained. Theodore—where is Theodore?

Nin. (*Seeing the* COUNTESS.) Your ladyship's humble servant, my lady.

Wer. What! is the countess here?—(*Rises from his seat.*)

Countess Bel. (*Aside.*) My emotion will not permit me to speak to him.

Wer. (*Taking the hand of the* COUNTESS.) Is it you, madam?

Nin. Yes, it is her ladyship. (*Apart to him.*) Now may I go?

Wer. Yes, yes, be gone.

Nin. Your honour's ladyship will please not to leave our poor master till I return.

Wer. Hush!—hush, Ninetta: Why intrude this trouble?

Nin. Trouble!—her honour's ladyship thinks it a pleasure—she tells me so by her looks—Don't be uneasy: I will soon return. [*Exit.*

Wer. Ah, madam—you condescend to interest yourself for a poor infirm old man, almost forgotten by all the world besides. (*The* COUNTESS *presses his hand, and raises her eyes to heaven.*) Ah! those who honour old age are blest in this world, and will be so in the world to come. (*The* COUNTESS *sighs.*) You sigh, madam—are you the victim of sorrow?—

You do not answer me.—But I entreat your pardon —cruel as this silence appears to me—you have, perhaps, reasons, into which I have no right to inquire.

Countess Bel. No—good Maurice—no—no!

Wer. (*Struck by her voice.*) Ah!—how these accents strike me!—Good heavens!—I remember once before——

Countess Bel. Moderate your emotion.

Wer. Again!—Oh! they penetrate my inmost heart.

Countess Bel. It is because my voice recalls to you ideas of regret, that I fear to speak.

Wer. Your voice does indeed recal to my mind one as culpable as you are good and virtuous—a daughter—whom I adored—who has poisoned my latter days, by uniting herself with an outcast of society.

Countess Bel. Have you allowed her to justify herself?

Wer. What can justify her? She has rebelled against the authority of a parent—that authority which has its origin on high. She has outraged the law which nature writes in our hearts—man abhors the treason, and Heaven will punish it.

Countess Bel. Unfortunate daughter!

Wer. You feel compassion for her—your generous heart sympathises with her sufferings.—Believe me, she is unworthy of the interest you take in her fate.

Countess Bel. If a stranger can feel for her sufferings—what must be your pangs—for surely, notwithstanding your resentment—there must be moments when you pity her?

Wer. There are, there are.—Oh! when I hear that interesting voice, so much resembling hers, I yield myself to the sweet illusion—I seem to possess once more the daughter who ought to have been the comfort of my age—that daughter whom I cherished in my soul—and whom I still love.

Countess Bel. Do you love her?

Wer. Yes, but she shall never know it.

Countess Bel. Yet, if, trembling, forlorn, repentant, she were to implore you——

Wer. I would bid her be gone.

Countess Bel. If embracing your knees—with tears of bitter anguish, she were to address you in that voice which you still find interesting—should she say, "My father, culpable as I may seem, my fault was involuntary.—The victim of deception—my only alternative was my seducer or death—what should I chuse?"

Wer. Death!

Countess Bel. Were you to know what I have suffered—

Wer. I have suffered too.

Countess Bel. Deprived of a father's caresses—sinking under his hatred—

Wer. Deprived of a daughter's attentions—sinking under age—infirmities, dishonour.—

Countess Bel. I will not repeat what sacrifices—what painful efforts have enabled me to contribute to your comforts.

Wer. (*Aside.*) What do I hear?

Countess Bel. It was a delightful duty which I fulfilled!—Oh, forgive your daughter!

Wer. You forget.

Countess Bel. Listen to the dictates of your own heart.

Wer. The warmth with which you plead for her—

Countess Bel. I plead for myself.

Wer. Yourself!

Countess Bel. I implore for mercy and forgiveness.

Wer. My brain burns! Who are you? Answer me.

ountess Bel. I am—

Wer. (*Drops upon his knees, and raises his hands, as if to curse her.*) My execrations—

Countess Bel. Ah!—he will curse me. Hold! I am the countess. I had almost forgot myself.

Wer. Pardon me, madam: I too had forgot myself. —I do not wonder at your kindness—sympathy ever dignifies the noble mind.

Countess Bel. I hoped by this appeal to your feelings to have proved that mercy ever lives in the heart of a father. But Heaven is just, and we must bow to its dispensations.

Enter CARRONADE, THEODORE, *and* NINETTA, *followed by Peasants.*

Car. Come, bustle, bustle; every one to their places: his lordship's honour, the count, will be here in a moment.

Enter the COUNT, EUGENIA, *and* ARMAGH.

Fritz. (*Without.*) I must see the count, your master.

Serv. We dare not admit any stranger.

Enter FRITZ *at the gate.*

Fritz. Is the Count Belfior here?

Count Bel. What means this intrusion?

Eug. It is that wretch. (*Apart to the* COUNTESS.)

Countess Bel. (*To* EUGENIA.) Send the peasants away—I tremble at what is to come. (EUGENIA *sends off the Peasants.*)

Fritz. Count Belfior.

Count Bel. What would you with me?

Arm. This is the very same ill-looking fellow we saw this morning. (*To* CARRONADE.)

Car. He who stopped your carriage in the forest? Why, you impudent villain!

(FRITZ *looks contemptuously on him.*)

Car. Don't frown at me—I have seen too many ill-looking faces to be scared by yours.

Fritz. You must pardon me, my lord, if my errand

here should interrupt your happiness.—I come hither to demand—

Count Bel. To demand what?

Fritz. My son.

Count Bel. Your son!

Fritz. Yes—behold him there—(*Pointing to* THEODORE.) That lady can give positive testimony.—Answer, madam—Are you not Eliza Werner—are you not my wife? (*To the* COUNTESS.)

Wer. Eliza Werner!—how have I been deceived!—Open, oh earth!—and swallow up a wretched father, to whom existence is become an insupportable burden.

Count Bel. Then you are—

Fritz. Isidore Fritz—her husband.

Arm. Isidore Fritz! Carronade, a word with you. (*He whispers* CARRONADE, *and they go out.*)

Count Bel. Maurice your father!

Countess Bel. Yes; I had hoped to obtain from him my pardon before I explained—But I am mad—Have pity on me.

Count Bel. Eliza, do not condescend to justify yourself.

Fritz. Hear me, sir.

Count Bel. Miserable victim of guilt and despair, if yet you pretend to innocence, raise your down-cast eyes—look, if you can, upon that suffering angel. No, by Heavens, you dare not: the honest glow of nature deserts your pallid cheek, and conscience, true to her task, stamps on your countenance the guilt of your heart.

Fritz. All this will not deprive me of my rights. That lady is my wife—Yes, she is still mine—and all the property she possesses becomes mine also. This castle, and the domain around it, I claim as mine.

Count Bel. Do not rouse me to vengeance. Be gone.

Wer. Vile seducer! who hast deprived me of the

sole comfort of my existence, ere I depart, the prophetic curse of age and misery shall alight on thee—The dark cloud of death hovers over thee—Hark! I hear the warning thunder—the bolt of vengeance will strike thee.—O miserable father!

Nin. Whither will you go?

Wer. Wherever I can find a spot unpolluted by the wicked—wherever I may gently lay me down and die in peace.

Countess Bel. My father, hear the voice of despair.

[*Exeunt* WERNER, *led by* NINETTA, *the* COUNTESS *and* THEODORE *following.*

Count Bel. Fiend! (*To* FRITZ) you expected much from your accusation of the countess, but you have been deceived. Before our marriage, frankly and nobly she told me the whole truth. I wished to acknowledge—to adopt her son; she opposed it, fearing that if she owned herself as his mother, we should be constrained to declare to Theodore the name and crimes of him who now stands before me. Leave me, or I cannot answer for my indignation.

(*A bugle-horn is heard at a distance.*

Fritz. (*Aside.*) Ah! the bugle-horn! Then Walter has succeeded. The banditti will join me, and I shall triumph still. Yes, my lord, I will depart—but to return more terrible.

Enter ARMAGH *and* CARRONADE, *with Servants.*

Car. Stop one moment, if you please.

Fritz. What have you to say?

Car. Nothing; I am not ambitious of your conversation; but this gentleman must have a word or two with you. (*Pointing to* ARMAGH.)

Arm. (*Looking at a paper which he holds in his hand.*) Yes, it is the same. Your name, I think, is Isidore Fritz.

Fritz. You know it is.—I must be gone.

Car. (*Stopping him.*) Not yet, if you please.

Arm. You have served in the Austrian army about eighteen years?

Fritz. Well, what of that?

Arm. Only that you deserted from your regiment —that you were, by the sentence of a court martial, condemned to die—and that I, as serjeant-major of the said regiment, and ordered to look out for deserters, shall have the honour this day of seeing the sentence carried into execution.

Count Bel. Just Heaven!

Fritz. You think yourselves sure of me, but remember I am a soldier. If I am to be your prize, win me and wear me.

(*Draws a brace of pistols, and presents them to* ARMAGH *and* CARRONADE. *They seize him, and wrest the pistols from him.* CARRONADE *calls on the Peasants, and the Servants at the same moment rush forward, and secure* FRITZ.

Count Bel. To the western tower; there let him be strictly guarded.

[*Exeunt the* COUNT, *followed by* ARMAGH, CARRONADE, *and Servants, bearing off* FRITZ.

FINALE.—CHORUS OF PEASANTS.

Our enemy a captive viewing,
Now all his hopes of vengeance fail:
Again our simple sports renewing,
Once more shall peace and joy prevail.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I

The Wood where the Banditti have their hiding-place. At the end of a long avenue the Lake is seen—in the distance.

CHORUS OF BANDITTI.

1st Rob. See, now breaks the morning!
Watchful shun the dawn of day;
Light appearing gives the warning,
Our gallant chief we must obey.
Chorus. Companions, see, now breaks the morning, &c.
Mon. Brave friends, th' eventful hour is near;
You will with hands and hearts obey me?
Chorus. We will with hands and hearts obey thee.
Mon. You swear obedience to my commands?
Chorus. Yes—our obedience the oath demands.
Mon. Tyrant power our hate inspiring,
Glory's cause each bosom firing,
Yet for glory though you burn,
Patient wait your chief's return.
Chorus. Yes, our obedience we declare,
On thy conquering sword we swear;
We will wait our chief's return.

Mon. Thanks, my brave comrades! This pledge of your obedience I had to expect from your faithful

attachment to me. Walter has again been among us this night.

1*st Rob.* I saw him—conversed with him.

Mon. He has seduced from our band some weak spirits, whom, perhaps, we could well spare—but I regret that any of us should engage in the sanguinary trade of an assassin.

1*st Rob.* The noble Count Belfior is his destined victim.

Mon. And shall a brave soldier fall, who is the honour, the pride of our country, while there is an arm among us to save him? Honour forbids the thought.

1*st Rob.* Lead us on to vengeance.

Mon. Hold, my friends. In this enterprise I will risk no life but my own.—If I survive, expect me here by to-morrow's dawn—if I fall, do not let fruitless sorrow unnerve your manly hearts—avenge your captain—To your posts. [*Exeunt Banditti.*

SONG.—MONTENERO.

What pleasure, past expressing,
Inspires the feeling breast:
Ah! surely life's chief blessing
Is to render others blest.
Now for the conflict I'll prepare,
And honour's glorious path pursue:
Whate'er the perils I must dare,
To gratitude the debt is due.
What pleasure, &c.

[*Exit* MONTENERO.

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter CARRONADE.

Car. It will do! oh! it will do—it will do—thank Heaven I have lived to some purpose—My benefactor, the Count Belfior, went on a cruize, and left me here a sort of guard-ship—I have done my duty—and though my heart yearned for my native country, I have faithfully served my time on a foreign station. Well, now the count comes safe into port, I am relieved—and I join the Channel fleet. What joy shall I feel at seeing once more dear Old England! Amidst the storms which overwhelm the world, liberty, driven from every shore—seeking for a land of refuge, again hails the white cliffs of Albion as her own—and casts anchor on her favoured island.

Enter ARMAGH.

Arm. Well, Mister Carronade—the job is done—the business of Mr Fritz is settled—I expect the musketeers here instantly to take charge of him; and this deserter—ah! the devil desert him.

Car. No, that he won't, you may depend upon it.

Arm. Very well, then he will have his deserts at last. But Mr Fritz—the aforesaid will—be in custody within half an hour.

Car. Why, is he not in safe custody now?

Arm. To be sure he is—here is the key of his pri-

son—but I mean the party of soldiers will attend him —So much for business—now for our wine, and let us take it coolly. (*Fills wine to* CARRONADE *and himself.*) "Long life and happiness to Count Belfior."

Car. With all my heart, and to his charming countess. As for the old baron her father——

Arm. Rather a bit of a savage, I take it, Mr Carronade—Here's to ye, sir. (*Drinks.*)

Car. After his daughter had piloted him for so many years, to cast her off to misery! Zounds! suppose an enemy drowning in a storm, if one could not hoist out a boat, one would throw over a hen-coop.

Arm. Very true—very true—but your goblet is empty, Mister Carronade; permit me to fill it. (*Fills again.*) By the by, you must lead a pleasant life here—plenty of pretty girls in the neighbourhood, and I suppose you make love yet?

Car. Ay, to be sure—though the oak is grown old, the ivy will twine round it.

Arm. But you will remember, my old oak, that love is a study, in which the oldest scholars are not always the greatest proficients. (*Fills again.*)

Car. That may be—but I never studied love at all —I took to it naturally, as you took to whisky.

Arm. It was exactly my case—and let me tell you —love and whisky are mightily alike. Love's charming to the taste, and so is whisky: It warms a man's heart, and turns his head—and so does whisky—And love makes one do mighty foolish things—so does whisky—Then when love gets out of your head, you forswear it bitterly—and when the whisky gets out of your head, you forswear that too—and then—why, then you take another dose, whether of love or whisky, 'tis all the same thing.

SONG.—ARMAGH.

I.

Love and whisky both
Rejoice an honest fellow:
Unripe joys of life,
Love and whisky mellow.
Both the head and heart
Set in palpitation;
From both I've often found
A mighty sweet sensation.
Love and whisky's joys,
Let us gaily twist 'em;
In the thread of life,
Faith we can't resist 'em!

II.

But love's jealous pang
In heart-ache oft we find it.
Whisky, in its turn,
A head-ache leaves behind it.
Thus of love or drink
We curse th' enchanted cup, sir;
All its charms forswear,
Then take another sup, sir.
Love and whisky's, &c.

III.

Love and whisky can
To any thing persuade us:
No other power we fear,
That ever can invade us.
Should others dare intrude,
They'll find our lads so friskey,
By none can be subdu'd,
Excepting love and whisky.

May the smiles of love
Cheer our lads so clever;
And with whisky, boys,
We'll drink King George for ever.

Arm. Why, what's the matter with you, friend Carronade?

Car. I am afraid I sha'n't be in England time enough to meet the invaders.

Arm. Psha, man! you'll be in time to meet 'em, I warrant you.

Car. Ay, but on our own ground I mean.

Arm. Well, so you will, whether by land or sea —you know the ocean has always been our own ground.

Car. They would taste the sweets of our island—they would steal the honey they cannot find at home; but let 'em remember the bees are armed with a sting to defend the fruits of their own industry; and if the drones invade the hive, let them beware of the swarm.

Arm. Bravo, Carronade—you give good reasons why a man should fight for his country.—I could give many more. In the first place—but what signifies giving reasons—if a man can't find 'em in his own breast, 'tis in vain to look for 'em any where else. (*The bugle-horn is heard.*) Hey day! what noise is that?

Car. Zounds! it seems like a signal for action. [*Exit.*

Arm. Well, love, fighting, or whisky, 'tis all the same to me.

Re-enter CARRONADE.

What's the matter?

Car. The banditti have come down from the mountain—they have released that villain Fritz, and threaten ruin and desolation around; so I shall pipe all

hands to quarters; make 'em a bit of a speech; form our line of battle—and then let 'em bear down on us—we are ready with a broadside and three cheers.

Arm. Hold, my friend. Are you so fond of solo fighting, that you won't allow an honest Irishman to take part in a duet with you?

Car. Come along then—Ireland and England for ever.

Arm. Ay, England and Ireland for ever.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter COUNT *and* MONTENERO.

Count Bel. Generous Montenero, your endeavours to save me may prove your own destruction—Did not you hear the rebel band call aloud for you?

Mont. Fear not for me, my lord.

Count Bel. Arm all within the castle. We will meet this band of ruffians—we fight for life—for honour—for freedom—and Heaven will strengthen our arms to defend the blessings he has bestowed.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Garden belonging to the Castle.

Enter MONTENERO, *meeting* EUGENIA *and* NINETTA.

TRIO—AND CHORUS.

Nin. Hark, they approach.
Eug. How my heart beats!
Nin. Now the noise comes.
Eug. No—it retreats.

Ah cruel men, why thus pursue
Vengeance, where grateful thanks are due?

Nin. Ah what shall we say?

Eug. The truth we must deny.

Nin. A word will confound us,

Eug. But yet let us try.

Mon. The truth do not deny:
Fear not for me—none will pursue
Vengeance, where grateful thanks are due.

Eug. & *Nin.* Retire, retire, until the foe shall be gone.
Hark, hark, how they call.

Chorus. March on.

Nin. & *Eug.* Retire—depend on us—we'll send them on.

[MONTENERO *retires into an Arbour. Enter the Banditti, headed by* FRITZ *and* WALTER.

March on, the place is near,
But where is the foe we have to fear?

Enter MONTENERO *from the Arbour.*

CHORUS OF BANDITTI.

Mon. Brave friends! companions dear,
Lead on—I have nought to fear.

Chorus. See, our chief is here.

Women. His life oh! spare—his fate I fear.

Chorus. Lead on—he has nought to fear.

1*st Rob.* Confide in me: dishonour's stain I will not bear.

Wal. Will you the name of traitor bear?
Disobedience will you dare?

Chorus. Lead on, &c. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in the Castle.

Enter the Count, meeting CARRONADE.

Car. My lord, I give you joy of our victory. Fritz is again our prisoner—I told you how it would be—our volunteers have conquered, and so they ever will, while the heart that nerves the arm is animated by honour and loyalty.

Count Bel. Thanks, my brave fellow, for your assistance—Fritz again our prisoner!—Then I must instantly resolve.—Leave me, my friend—the countess approaches. [*Exit* CARRONADE.

Enter the COUNTESS.

Countess Bel. After what is passed, may I still hope—

Count Bel. Yes, you are dearer to me than ever. The sacrifice I would make to you is beyond my strength: Your honour demands it, but my feeble virtue sinks before the exertion.—Aid me, best of women.

Countess Bel. Ah, my dear lord! it is adversity that calls forth the energy of virtue. The path of duty is rugged, but we will pursue it.—Speak the dreadful sentence—we must separate.

Count Bel. Eliza, your courage restores me to myself—You have pronounced the awful sentence which died on my tongue. Yes, we must separate.

Countess Bel. And when this death-like sacrifice

shall be made, will you in absence preserve some esteem for your once dear Eliza? She will not be odious to you? You will not despise her?

Count Bel. Despise her!—Hear me, Eliza, and judge whether I merit that suspicion from you. This unprincipled man, who is the source of your misery, you have hitherto considered merely as a remorseless persecutor, resolved on your ruin. You forget that this man, arrested under a sentence of death, may to-morrow expiate his crimes, by yielding up his life to justice——

Countess Bel. Unhappy Eliza! when will thy bitter cup be full?

Count Bel. And that he will leave to you, and to your son, a dishonoured name—a memory hateful and accursed. From this cruel fate I will save you.

Countess Bel. My guardian angel!

Count Bel. I will send him to a foreign country—I will provide for his wants.—As for myself, submitting to an austere duty, which will separate me from you during the life of that wretch—I will still be near you—I will watch over you with the tenderest attention—your son I will adopt as my own—I shall then have ever near me the image of my Eliza. If relenting Heaven, appeased by our sufferings, shall permit our re-union—oh, Eliza!

Countess Bel. Edward, my gratitude overpowers me—this unbounded goodness—my tears must thank you. (*Embracing him.*)

Count Bel. Theodore approaches.—Dearest friend, adieu! [*Exit* COUNTESS.) Must I then save the wretch who has undone me? Must Fritz still exist, to cloud my every hope? Why should a profligate, whose life is justly forfeited, be permitted still to outrage society with his crimes? Let the laws decide his fate—then will Eliza be mine once more, and blessed in the forgiveness of a father!—This happiness—but what is the price at which it must be bought? Is it by blood which I can spare—

by dishonour which I can avoid?—No—no—Belfior, though the trial be severe, let not thy virtue faint.

Enter THEODORE.

Theodore, I must immediately see your father.

Theo. Sir, you told me I was to have no other father than yourself.

Count Bel. Forgive me, my son, for so you shall ever be—Tell Carronade to meet me instantly in the garden—at the door under my chamber window—and to bring before me—but I will not name him.

Theo. My lord, I know that he of whom you speak is very, very culpable—but—

Count Bel. Go on.

Theo. I feel emotions to which I can scarcely give a name.—I know that crimes ought to be punished—but death is very awful to the guilty—and if I have shuddered at seeing a public criminal pass to expiate his guilt—one to whom I was an utter stranger—how much must I now feel? I scarcely know what to ask. (*Kneeling.*) Do not think hardly of me.

Count Bel. Generous Theodore! Nature, behold thy triumph! Yes, your prayer is granted—his life is safe.

Theo. (*Kisses his hand.*) Then I am happy.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.

The Garden belonging to the Castle. A large insulated Tree on the right—on the left is a Statue.—On the left is also seen the outside of the Castle, in which is a small arched Door.

Enter the COUNT, *from the Door.*

Count Bel. One painful struggle is past—But alas! I have another task to perform.—I feel a secret horror in the presence of that man.

Enter FRITZ *and* CARRONADE.

Car. My lord, you directed me to bring before you this son of mischief—here he is.

Count Bel. 'Tis well, my faithful Carronade.—Now leave me.

Car. Leave you alone with that man! Why, surely, my lord, you don't mean it.

Count Bel. What have I to fear?

Car. The worst.

Count Bel. I will prevent him doing me harm.

Car. How?

Count Bel. By doing good to him.

Car. Ah! that generous philosophy does not always succeed in this wicked world.

Count Bel. Have no fears for me—Leave us.

Car. (*Aside.*) If I obey my master upon this occasion, I should be one of the worst of servants. Eyes and ears were given us to observe what is passing—

and I shall therefore put mine to their proper use. (*He retires, and conceals himself behind the statue.*)

Count Bel. Fritz—approach.

Fritz. What would you with me?

Count Bel. You know the punishment that awaits you.

Fritz. Death—I do not fear it.

Count Bel. But the repose of a virtuous woman, whose happiness you have poisoned, and the warm interest I feel for her son, whom your punishment would overwhelm with shame, induce me to preserve your life.

Fritz. Well—if your great soul is resolved on a generous action, open your gates, and let me go.

Count Bel. It would be dangerous to depart at this moment: you would fall into the hands of the soldiers who are now on their way to secure you as a deserter. (FRITZ *looks about him anxiously.*) You cannot escape: The park gates are too well guarded. I will give you a letter of recommendation to the captain of a ship now ready to sail, and money sufficient to place you beyond the reach of want.

Fritz. A handsome offer!

Count Bel. That walk, overshadowed by trees, leads to the smaller gate of the park—by that way I will accompany you myself, and put you into safe hands.

Fritz. You will accompany me yourself!

Count Bel. In person, to secure your safety.

Fritz. Tis well.

Count Bel. Forget, if possible, the name you bear —and assume one of which you need not be ashamed —Under other skies you may meet with better fortune—perhaps with repose—but remember guilt knows no repose. (*Drums without.*) Hark, your pursuers approach: I will detain them. You are

in perfect safety here—I have sent all the attendants away from this part of the castle.

[*Exit* COUNT.

Fritz. I shall attend you.—Who's there?

Enter WALTER.

Wal. Your comrade Walter.

Fritz. Walter! Most opportunely arrived.

Wal. I had the good luck to escape from our unsuccessful battle—and finding all the avenues to the park guarded, was glad to remain here concealed till this moment.

Fritz. Are you armed?

Wal. I am, with dagger and pistol.

Fritz. Good! Then, credulous fool, the day is mine! (*Aside.*)

Wal. Surely it was the Count Belfior with whom you were conversing just now.

Fritz. The very man—and strange to tell, he offers me liberty, a sum of money—I expect him here every moment.

Wal. We shall be two to one.

Fritz. That walk leads to the smaller gate of the park: he has promised to conduct me that way to liberty and safety.

Wal. What is to be done?

Fritz. You see that tree—the count and I must pass it.

Wal. Well.

Fritz. Hide yourself behind that tree—the moment I see the count make his appearance, I will give you a signal to be in readiness.

Wal. What signal?

Fritz. I will gently strike one hand upon the other, thus. (*Strikes his hands together.*)

Wal. Good! So much for the signal.

Fritz. I shall contrive to go forward a few paces.

When the count, who will follow me, is opposite to the tree, rush forward, and strike him to the heart.

Wal. But how shall I distinguish your person, the night is so dark?

Fritz. Dark! so much the better: though you cannot distinguish persons, you will see who is the second man to pass—him you will attack.

Wal. You are unarmed—take my pistol.

Fritz. By no means: keep it for your own defence. (*Aside.*) I will have no marks of suspicion about me. (*To him.*) Let us separate—take your station—remember the second man who passes that tree—the second.

Wal. I shall not forget—the second.

[*Exit* FRITZ. WALTER *places himself behind the tree.*

CARRONADE *comes from behind the Statue.*

Car. Villain! worst of villains! What is to be done? A moment decides my master's fate.—Ah! the castle gate is closed—assistance cannot be procured—the servants cannot hear my voice—I dare not quit this spot—for if in the dark I miss the count, nothing can save him.—Hold! What if I try another expedient—The second man! 'Tis a fearful risk, but I must attempt it.—The count is here. [*Retires.*

Enter the COUNT, *from the arched Door.*

Count Bel. Fritz.

FRITZ *perceiving the* COUNT, *comes forward and claps his hands.*

Wal. (*Looking out from behind the tree.*) There is the signal.

Count Bel. (*To* FRITZ.) I perceive you are there—answer me not, but pass on in silence.

(CARRONADE, *who has watched* FRITZ, *comes forward, and passes hastily before him, the* COUNT

following FRITZ—CARRONADE *now passes the tree.—When* FRITZ, *who has followed* CARRONADE, *is opposite to the tree,* WALTER, *who has marked* FRITZ *as the second man to pass, rushes forward, and stabs him.*)

Fritz. Ah! fatal mistake—you have destroyed me! (*Falls.*)—WALTER *attempts to escape,* CARRONADE *seizes him.*

Car. No, villain, you shall not escape.

Count Bel. Heavens! what is here! Help; lights, there, lights!

Enter Servants with lights.

Count Bel. What do I see! Fritz! Bear him from my sight.

[FRITZ *is borne off by Servants—others take off* WALTER.

Car. As a recompence for your goodness, that monster plotted your destruction; but heaven chose me as the instrument to save my master's life.

Enter COUNTESS BELFIOR, EUGENIA, THEODORE, ARMAGH, *&c.*

(*The* COUNT *speaks to the* COUNTESS *in dumb shew.*)

Enter WERNER *with* THEODORE.

Count Bel. Werner, thy prophecy is fulfilled—the victim is fallen.

Wer. Is it, indeed, so? Where is my daughter?

Countess Bel. At your feet.

Wer. Eliza! come to my heart.

Count Bel. Eliza, behold the reward of thy virtues. Mysterious Heaven! thy justice triumphs. An offended father, who pardons his child, imitates the highest of all examples.

The principal Characters form a Tableau, and the Curtain falls to Music.

RAMAH DROOG;

A

COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

BY

JAMES COBB, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The RAJAH,	*Mr Emery.*
CAPTAIN SIDNEY,	*Mr Incledon.*
LIFFEY.	*Mr Johnstone.*
GOVINDA,	*Mr Hill.*
CHELLINGOE,	*Mr Munden.*
ZEMAUN,	*Mr H. Johnston.*
Indian Guards,	*Messrs. Thompson, &c.*
Attendants,	*Messrs. Klanert, Abbot &c.*
1st Prisoner,	*Mr Claremont.*
2d Prisoner,	*Mr Wilde.*
3d Prisoner,	*Mr Gray.*
ELIZA,	*Miss Wheatley.*
ALMINAH,	*Mrs Chapman.*
ZELMA,	*Miss Waters.*
MARGARET,	*Mrs Mills.*
AGRA,	*Miss Simms.*
ORSANA,	*Mrs Iliff.*
Women of the Zenana,	*Mesd. Walcup, &c. &c.*

RAMAH DROOG.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Court-yard adjoining to the RAJAH'S *Palace, into which there are several entrances from a Prison: On one side is a Tower, forming a part of the Prison: In the Tower is a window, and also a door which communicates with the Court-yard.*

Several Indian Guards and British Soldiers (prisoners) come on, and sing a Chorus.

Indians. Now loudly raise victorious strains;
Fallen the vanquish'd foe remains,
Never to break his galling chains.

Britons. Tho' from each hope, each comfort torn,
Britons, the sons of freedom born,
Ever your taunts, your threats shall scorn.

Enter CHELLINGOE.

Chel. What a set of discontented rogues ye are! What is it you want? Have you not had the honour of being taken captive by the most valiant troops in all India—the soldiers of the great prince the Mahah Rajah Surooj Seing? Have you not the further honour of being imprisoned within the very walls of his highness's palace, in the famed fortress of Ramah Droog? Have you not a sumptuous allowance of rice and water once in four-and-twenty hours? Are you not allowed half an hour every day to leave your dungeon, and take the fresh air? What wou'd ye have?

1*st Pris.* Is our worthy commander well treated—the gallant Captain Sidney?

Chel. Well treated! How dare ye ask the question? Is he not my prisoner? Do you doubt my humanity? I'll have ye rack'd, flea'd alive, and dipp'd in boiling oil, if ye dare doubt my humanity.

2*d Pris.* At least, good worthy Chellingoe, grant us one boon.

Chel. Ay, that is ever the cry—Grant us this favour, and grant us that. And what acknowledgement do you make for my kindness? (*To the Indian guards.*) You may retire. (*To the Prisoners.*) I know some of you have watches, and rings, and snuff-boxes, and silver sleeve-buttons.

1*st Pris.* Indeed, good Chellingoe, we have already given them all up to you.

Chel. 'Tis false—You conceal your riches, ungrateful wretches as ye are, after my kindness to you. You would all have been strangled yesterday, if I had not suspected you had concealed wealth about you.

1*st Pris.* We acknowledge your goodness in getting us a respite.

Chel. Oh, ye do, do ye? Yes; I interested the clemency of his highness the Rajah—He has graciously permitted you to live, to make a full disclosure of your property. But what will all your wealth avail ye to-morrow, when you go to execution? Why not commit it to the care of me, your best friend? Go, go—I am ashamed of your avarice.

2*d Pris.* Grant us but this favour—Let us have one last look of our valiant commander, our brother, our friend, and—

Chel. And what—What have you to grant in return?

2*d Pris.* Here is a silver-hafted knife, the gift of my poor father.

Chel. O Heavens! a silver-hafted knife!—A dangerous weapon for a prisoner. Fie! fie! I wonder that was not taken from you before.

1*st Pris.* Here is a lucky sixpence, which my poor Kate gave me as a keep-sake when we parted; and I promised, should I ever return—

Chel. But you know you never will return, and so can't keep your promise. Give it to me.

2*d Pris.* Here are a gold mohur, two pagodas, and some rupees, which I found in my cell, among the straw.

Chel. A good fellow! a good fellow! Go look among the straw again—I dare say you'll find more. (*Aside.*) A tolerable morning's work. (*To them.*) Come, I like to see these generous sentiments revive in ye; and as your reward, you shall see your commander presently.—(*Makes a sign to the Guards at a distance, then unlocks one of the prison doors, from whence enter* SIDNEY, *who comes forward.*)

SONG.—SIDNEY.

Oft wealth or ambition will tempt us to dare
All the toils, all the perils that mortals can bear,
But the sigh of remembrance, wherever we roam,
Will fancy waft back to our dear native home.

Though rude be the clime, and though humble the cot,
The early idea is never forgot;
And the sigh, &c.

Chel. This is the hour when the Princess Alminah usually walks this way.

(SIDNEY *goes back into his prison.*

(*Locks the door.*) She has had interviews with my prisoner, the young English officer, and is certainly in love with him. If so, I must shew him favour. Now, how to turn this to my own advantage. (*To an Attendant.*) Send hither that female prisoner, in male attire, whom they call Margaret—that virago, who is confined apart from the rest: She may give me the information I want.

Mar. (*Without.*) Where is Chellingoe? Shew the way, sirrah. Ordinary time—march!

Enter MARGARET *dressed as a Soldier, preceded by a Slave.*

Chel. There is no taming that vixen.

Mar. (*To the Slave.*) To the left counter-march—quick march! [*Exit Slave.*

Chel. I'll have no riots here.

Mar. Attention! Hark ye, sir! What do you mean by keeping me in close captivity after I have demanded my parole? Am not I a prisoner of war? Was I not honourably fighting the battles of my country? How dare you treat a female British volun-

teer in this manner, taken fighting by the side of her husband?

Chel. And is there really any poor fellow in existence so unfortunate as to be your husband?

Mar. Sir, I have the honour to be a serjeant's lady —Nay more, he is a serjeant of grenadiers, and an Irishman—Need I add, that he is a man of courage?

Chel. No, you need not—his courage cannot be doubted, if he has been bold enough to venture on you.

Mar. I followed the example of my dear mistress, the wife of your prisoner, Captain Sidney. In contempt of every danger she accompanied him on this expedition. For convenience, we assumed male attire. My mistress, indeed, chose to be habited like an Indian servant; but for my part I always had a partiality for wearing the breeches.

Chel. Retire—the princess is here.

(CHELLINGOE *and* MARGARET *retire severally at a sign made to* CHELLINGOE *by* ORSANA, *who enters with* ALMINAH.)

Alm. Orsana, are we observed?

Ors. No, madam—Chellingoe understands how to take a hint. There is Sidney's window.

Alm. How provoking that he does not appear!

Ors. Madam, here is Chellingoe, who guards the captives.

Alm. Bid him approach.—(CHELLINGOE *comes forward from a cell.*) The English captives are still in your care?

Chel. Yes, madam.

Alm. I hope you treat the brave men with humanity?

Chel. With the utmost tenderness.

Alm. The honour of our nation requires that we should respect the virtues of an enemy.

Chel. Very true, madam: so I have said.

Alm. Especially when unfortunate—Poor wretches,

how I pity them! At a distance from their native country—separated from all they hold dear in friendship, in love.

Chel. Alas, madam! these considerations have but too painfully touch'd my heart.

Alm. I hope so; for remember, your life must answer for their ill treatment. Mark me, Chellingoe!—if any one should die while in your keeping, a most strict account of the cause will be required.

Chel. I live but to obey your illustrious family.

Ors. Her highness is curious to converse with their commander.

Chel. I will prepare him for the honour.

Alm. I will still conceal my rank from this captive, that awe may not restrain him from gratifying my inquiries. Let him attend me on the terrace.

[*Exit* CHELLINGOE *into a cell.*

How my heart beats! Govinda, your friendship must assist me in this interview.

Gov. Illustrious princess!

Alm. Oh, Govinda! this illustrious princess, as you call her, the favourite daughter of a powerful monarch, surrounded by her guards, in a palace where her word is fate—this mighty princess is in love; and no more than a poor, timid woman, trembling with apprehension at an interview with a captive stranger.

[*Exeunt* ALMINAH *and* ORSANA.

Gov. (*Alone.*) Yes, Alminah! I will fulfil your commands at the risk of my life. You have claims on my gratitude which must be obeyed.

SONG.—GOVINDA.

How lost the mind, which cold and dark,
From Gratitude's celestial fire
In vain receives the hallowed spark,
Falling, alas! but to expire!

Oft be my fervent vows renew'd
At the shrine of Gratitude !

Honor abhors the darksome cell
Unbless'd by Gratitude's bright flame ;
There pale distrust and treachery dwell,
There fraud asserts her willing claim.
Oft be my fervent vows renew'd
At the shrine of Gratitude. [*Exit.*

Enter CHELLINGOE *and* SIDNEY *from the cell.*

Chel. You are permitted to walk on this terrace—I have no orders to this effect ; but the indulgence is mine ; entirely my grace and favour, and I hope you will be grateful.

Capt. Sid. Behold the angels of pity, who have so kindly sought to sooth my grief.

Enter ALMINAH *and* ORSANA.

Gov. (*Coming forward.*) Gallant stranger ! the hour approaches when your chains shall be removed.

Capt. Sid. Astonishment ! my chains removed ! by whom ?

Alm. By me :—Oft have I listened to the melancholy sounds which gave vent to your sorrows, till my heart vibrated in unison. (*Raising her veil.*)

Capt. Sid. Charming creature ! But how is it possible——

Alm. Be content to know the extent of my power, without questioning the means : inquire no further. At midnight Govinda shall come to you in your prison—he can remove every obstacle to your release—follow him in silence—he will conduct you to me, and we will fly together.

QUARTETTE.—ALMINAH, ORSANA, GOVINDA, *and* SIDNEY.

Capt. Sid. Grateful, thus humbly bending,
My thanks deign to receive,

Alm. Me, in return defending,
My freedom you achieve.

Ors. Then, at the silent midnight hour,
When the tiger prowls for prey,

Gov. Fearless of all but slavery's power,
The moon shall light us on our way.

[*Exeunt* ALMINAH, ORSANA, *and* GOVINDA

(SIDNEY *re-enters his prison,* CHELLINGOE *locks the door after him, and comes forward.*)

Chel. This flirtation of the princess may be turned to good account. 'Tis fortunate to be in office when our superiors fall in love—a wise man may always profit by it. (*To* MARGARET, *who comes forward.*) Why don't you retire? Go back to your prison.

Mar. Be calm—be contented—I will not go back to my prison till I think proper.

Chel. What! am I to be braved thus? Retire instantly, or——

Mar. You had better not—I may possibly be hurt in the scuffle, perhaps mortally hurt—and if I shou'd die——

Chel. Well?

Mar. Why then you know, as the princess told you, your life must answer for it.

Chel. How unfortunate that she should overhear the conversation!

Mar. Don't provoke me, or I will certainly attempt

something dangerous.—How do you know that a mine is not now ready to spring under you?

Chel. Will you please to retire?

Mar. For aught you know you may have taken poison at your last meal.

Chel. I wish she was out of the prison with all my soul.

Mar. Or should that fail, I might poison myself, and swear you did it.

Chel. (*Aside.*) I shall not think myself safe till this vixen is disposed of. A thought strikes me—(*To her.*) I tell you what—you are a brave wench, and ought not to remain in confinement.

Mar. I agree with you for the first time.

Chel. Have you a mind to escape?

Mar. You wish to get rid of me?

Chel. I should have no objection.

Mar. And suppose I should be inclined to indulge you so far, what do you offer me?

Chel. Why, I offer you your freedom. What more would you have?

Mar. I would have the rupees you stole—my property.

Chel. How unconscionable! When I give you liberty.

Mar. True; but liberty and property should not be separated;—so, if you refuse—(*Talking aloud.*)

Chel. Hush! the princess may overhear us.

Mar. I mean it. I will proclaim your villanies, and demand justice.

Chel. Don't talk so loud. You shall escape on your own terms, if you will but go quietly. Zemaun!

Enter ZEMAUN.

I commit this prisoner to your care. (*Whispers* ZEMAUN.)

Mar. (*Aside.*) That Zemaun is a proud ferocious fellow, the terror of all the prisoners, and famed for

his implacable hatred to Europeans. Yet surely Chellingoe dares not play me a trick.

Chel. (*Aside to* ZEMAUN.) If destroyed beyond the bounds of the prison, you know it is no fault of mine. —(*To* MARGARET.) Adieu; my friend Zemaun will take care of you. Early in the morning follow him in silence.

Mar. (*To* ZEMAUN.) Lead on—I'll follow you.

[*Exit* ZEMAUN.

But, first, my friend Chellingoe, I must have my money.

DUET.—CHELLINGOE *and* MARGARET.

Mar. What! do you think I'll be robb'd of my money?
Chel. Your liberty—
Mar. Without my cash I value not a rush.
Chel. Trust to my honour.
Mar. In vain you give your honey.
I'll tell aloud your villainy!
Chel. Hush! Hush! Hush!
Here, take your money, and now let's say, good bye.
Mar. Not yet awhile, my purse is low, and yours in cash is flush!
Now, as they say, all have their price.
Chel. Faith! yours is much too high!
And I'll not bribe a vile informer—
Mar. Hush! Hush! Hush!
Chel. Zounds! I'll give no more, and so your course pursue.
Mar. Shake hands—a quarrel now your hopes as well as mine would crush.
Chel. To prison you would go again!
Mar. And what becomes of you?
Chel. (*Aside.*) The devil take ye!
Mar. What do you say!
Chel. Hush! Hush! Hush!
Mar. (*Aside.*) The devil take ye!
Chel. What do you say?
Mar. Hush! Hush! Hush! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Plain, with a distant View of the RAJAH's *Hill-Fort.*

Enter LIFFEY *from a Wood.*

Lif. Oh, Liffey! Barney Liffey! What an unhappy serjeant of grenadiers art thou! An Irishman by birth, and a soldier by choice! I, who never turned my back upon an enemy—no, nor a friend, whether man or woman—that it shou'd be my fate to play at bo-peep in a thicket, like a hunted tiger! But how can I help it? With such a charge committed to my care, such an innocent sweet creature, whom I have pledged my honour to protect—And then, to leave my wife, my dear Margaret behind me—there is another misfortune! for though we constantly quarrel when we meet, I always find a violent affection for her when she is absent. Indeed I think we agree best at a distance. The moment the parson made us one we became two, and indeed, we have not been much together since we were united.

Eli. (*Without.*) Liffey! Where are you?

Lif. Here, my good lady. This way, madam; you may venture to peep out of your hiding-place.

Enter ELIZA *in male attire.*

Eli. After passing two tedious days in that gloomy forest, how delightful is the open air! This change of prospect—Oh, Liffey! can that be the prison of my husband?

Lif. It is; that is Ramah Droog fortress; that is my master Captain Sidney's prison. Oh! I shall never forget this valley. Here our detachment was surrounded—here some brave fellows fell, and all the rest were taken prisoners—except myself—No, no—I was not amongst the slain: nor was I taken prisoner. Oh! I shall never forget how the black rascals came pouring down upon us on every side, when my master turned to me suddenly: "Liffey," said he, "all is lost—Make your escape as fast as possible—Run away with my wife, I entreat you." And then you know, ma'am—

Eli. I know not what passed! At the sight of my Sidney's danger, my boasted courage forsook me.

Lif. "Run away, sir!" cried I: "Alas! poor Liffey never disobeyed your orders before; but it is impossible to run away—Upon my soul, I can't turn my back upon an enemy—I can't muster up courage to do it."

Eli. But you could not disobey your master?—

Lif. That is my only consolation for behaving like a coward. "Leave me, my good fellow, if you have any friendship for me," said he. By my honour, thought I, that seems to be an odd way of shewing friendship, (though not unusual,) to desert a friend when he stands most in need of assistance.

Eli. Who are those men armed with spears and javelins?

Lif. Tiger-hunters, madam, beating among the jungle in search of the game—A thought strikes me; and yet—

Eli. Your fidelity entitles you to my attention. What would you propose?

Lif. Why, look ye, madam! We are two hundred miles from the British settlement; and our whole stock of provisions is one poor little solitary potatoe, in the corner of my knapsack.

Eli. Good heavens! Liffey, did you not tell me that you had rice enough for a week?

Lif. So I thought till I looked into the bag just now; and i'faith, I find, instead of a bag of rice, I had in my hurry carried off a full suit of clothes belonging to old Sampan, our commissary's clerk.

Eli. Well, proceed.

Lif. That is what I cannot do. I cannot proceed, and therefore I think the wisest way is to stay where we are, and yield ourselves prisoners to these tiger-hunters.

Eli. If you are known to be a soldier, you will be either imprisoned, or obliged to enlist in their service. What is to be done? Can you pass for a musician?

Lif. Madam!—to be sure I can sing a little; but I could never turn a tune in my life, even on the jew's harp.

Eli. Is there no situation in which you could be useful to an Indian prince?

Lif. Why, yes: I think I could take care of his wives; but I'm afraid they won't trust me to do that.

Eli. I have heard that the character most respected throughout the east, is that of an European physician.

Lif. And would you have me pretend to be a doctor?

Eli. We can think of no better scheme; and I shall be secure in passing for your servant. You may easily conceal your ignorance. I dare say they never had an European physician among them.

Lif. Most likely not; for they seem to be a hale, hearty set of people.

Eli. But then these regimentals——

Lif. Suppose, madam, I change them for old Sampan's suit of clothes?

Eli. A lucky thought!

Lif. And by my soul I shall then be a curiosity worth your seeing. [*Exit.*

Eli. Yes, my beloved Sidney! I shall once more rejoin thee, and share thy fate—perhaps effect thy rescue.

SONG—ELIZA.

With trembling steps and sinking heart
I urge my weary way;
At every whispering breeze I start,
All terror and dismay.
Still Hope, with magic mirror tries
My sinking heart to cheer,
And points where smiling prospects rise
Of many a circling year.
Or when the sandy desart bright
Reflects the burning noon,
Or when the chilling damps of night
Arise and dim the moon.
Still Hope, &c.

Re-enter LIFFEY, *drest in the clothes he has mentioned.*

Lif. Here I am, madam!—What d'ye think of me? [*A bugle-horn sounds.*

Eli. Hark! the hunters approach. Now remember, I am to pass for your servant.

Lif. Then, in token of servitude, carry the knapsack—you'll not find it very heavy. There is nothing in it but the poor little potatoe that has travelled with us so far.

Eli. Now be very careful how you answer their questions. They are here. Why do you loiter thus, Liffey?

Lif. I was only admiring myself, madam. How lucky it is that I blundered upon this suit of clothes! —I could not have made a more fortunate mistake, had it even been on purpose. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A View in the Fort, the same as the first Scene.

Enter CHELLINGOE.

Chel. His highness the great Rajah taken ill, suddenly ill—violently ill—and a suspicion of poison! His doctors disagree as usual; so, between the malady and the medicine, he'll give us the slip. What a blow to my hopes! what a check to my rising ambition! My former disgrace forgot—worming myself into favour further and further every day! and now to lose the fruits of my toils!

Enter an Attendant.

Atten. Some more European prisoners are brought in. Will you please to examine them?

Chel. No—I'm not in a humour to examine prisoners.—The Rajah will certainly die. What with the doctors and the disease, his constitution will be knock'd about like a shuttlecock between battledores, till the parties grow tired of the contention, and he falls to the ground.

Atten. Will you please to have the Europeans closely confined in the dungeon, or in the castle?

Chel. Are they rich?

Atten. I don't know—we have not examined them.

Chel. Right. Always leave that to me.

Atten. One of them says he is a physician.

Chel. A physician, and from Europe! I'll send him to the Rajah.—Bring him in directly.

[*Exit Atten.*

If his highness should be cured by a doctor of my recommendation, what a brilliant career of honours

and dignities will open to me!—Then, if the European should kill him!—But I'll make it his interest not to kill him. Ay, but if he should give too strong a dose by mistake. No matter; I dare say the doctor knows enough of his profession to keep that a secret from every body.

(*Re-enter Attendant, and converses aside with* CHELLINGOE.)

Enter LIFFEY *and* ELIZA, *as prisoners.*

Eli. My husband yet living, and a prisoner in that tower! Oh! Liffey, my heart beats high with expectation.

Lif. Oh! madam, and my heart sinks low with disappointment. No intelligence to be gained of poor Margaret, whether living or dead. It would be a comfort to be ascertained of the fact either way. But she is certainly no more: were she alive, her tongue would proclaim the circumstance to the whole prison.

Chel. (*Coming forward.*) This must be the doctor. Loosen his chains; never fetter the hands of genius. You are luckily arrived, and in good time.

Lif. I hope it will prove so, your honour.

Chel. I am told you are a physician?

Lif. I am glad you are told so, for I am not fond of speaking of myself.

Chel. How did it happen that you came into the territories of the great Rajah?

Lif. I have always been partial to travelling—travelling for improvement. Hearing you had a battle in the neighbourhood, I came to offer my assistance.

Chel. Well and discreetly answered! May I ask if you are eminent in your profession?

Lif. You may ask it; but my modesty won't let me give you an answer.

Chel. You seem to enjoy strong health yourself; a hopeful object for a sick person to look on.

Lif. Enjoy my health!—no wonder—I never tasted a drop of physic in my life.

Chel. Give me your hand—now I know you are a true doctor—they are never so selfish as to deprive their patients of medicine by taking it themselves.—(*To the Attendant.*) Remember that all possible respect must be shewn to this learned man and his follower. May I crave your name?

Lif. My name is Liffey—Doctor O'Liffey.—(*Apart to* ELIZA.) I shall tack the *O* to it now—it will give me more consequence.

Chel. Doctor O'Liffey, your fortune is made. I will patronize you—I have wonderful influence at the court of the illustrious Rajah. He is a great prince. Did you ever hear his titles?

Lif. No, your honour—I should like to remember them.

Chel. He is the mighty monarch, the Mahah Rajah, Surooj Seing; that is, the son of the lion, brother to the sun and moon, and cousin to all the stars in the firmament.

Lif. Then what blessed weather you must have in this country, if he and his relations are on good terms together. I suppose a foggy day, or a dark night, is a sure sign of a quarrel in the family.

Chel. He is the immortal and all-powerful Rajah, who, when he has dined, gives leave to all the princes of the earth to go to dinner.

Lif. How gracious and condescending! If they are as hungry as I am, they must feel it to be a singular favour.

Chel. Now, as I told you, I am a favourite at court—I can introduce you to be one of the state physicians.

Lif. Is his highness indisposed?

Chel. Yes; the immortal Rajah—

Lif. Is going to die, I suppose?

Chel. I hope not. But this all-powerful potentate—

Lif. Is in a very weak condition?

Chel. You shall attend his highness, and judge of his malady by the symptoms.

Eli. That is totally unnecessary, sir. My master can prescribe just as well without seeing the patient. He has one sovereign remedy upon which he depends.

Chel. A nostrum. He is a desperate follow—kill or cure, I perceive.

(GOVINDA *enters, and speaks to* CHELLINGOE *apart.*)

Lif. (*Apart.*) I say, madam—Who the devil do you mean? What have I to prescribe?

Eli. Any thing will answer the purpose.

Lif. Will it?

Eli. Yes; provided the remedy is not known here.

Lif. Then what say you to the little potatoe in my knapsack? 'Tis a sovereign remedy, that saves the lives of thousands every day in my country.

Eli. An excellent idea, Liffey!

Chel. (*Coming forward.*) The princess Alminah is gone to offer her devotions at the mosque for the recovery of his highness—she will return this way, and must not find us here. Let us be alert, and show our zeal—Doctor, we have no time to lose.

Lif. I am with you—I'll prepare this famous medicine.

Chel. Employ your best skill, doctor. Alla forbid that we should fail in the amiable duties of humanity! Come, doctor. [*Exit.*

(*As* LIFFEY *is about to follow, he is prevented by the Guards, who bow very low to him.*)

Lif. What do you mean, my friend? Are you going to take me in custody?

Atten. It is our duty—I presume you know the terms upon which you undertake this cure?

Lif. Oh! don't talk about it. I am not mercenary —a few diamonds and a dozen bags of your pagodas, as you call them—

Atten. If you succeed, you may name your reward; but I don't mean that.

Lif. No;—why then, what does your honour mean?

Atten. I mean—if you should fail.

Lif. Fail! ha! ha! ha! my dear, the thing is impossible.

Atten. I am glad to see you so confident.

Lif. Oh! you'll never have reason to complain of my want of confidence. Besides, the worst come to the worst, I suppose it is, "No cure no pay."

Atten. No—that is not the worst; for if his highness should unfortunately die under your care, his decease will be imputed to the medicine, and you will be trampled to death by elephants, agreeably to the custom in these cases.

Lif. Oh, miserable soul that I am!

Eli. But see, my dear Sidney appears.

Enter GOVINDA *and* SIDNEY *from the Prison.*

Gov. Yes; your deliverer is the Princess Alminah.

Sid. Distraction! a fearful light breaks in upon me.

Gov. She will no longer conceal her rank from you; and I shall have the felicity of giving liberty to a brave soldier. [*Exit.*

(LIFFEY *goes to* SIDNEY, *makes himself known to him, then points to* ELIZA.)

Sid. (*Exclaims.*) Oh, my Eliza!

(LIFFEY *prevents him from discovering to the Attendants that he recognizes her.*)

FINALE.

DUET—SIDNEY—ELIZA.

Oh! joy unexpected—fortune consenting,
Gives us the bliss to meet again.
Ah, fickle Deity! still more relenting!
When wilt thou break the captive's chain.

Enter CHELLINGOE.

Chel. Come, doctor, what can make you stay?
Make haste, my friend; we must away.
Lif. Ah! why the devil did I hither roam,
Where plagues and dangers are so many!
Oh, Barney Liffey! had you staid at home,
Content in little dear Kilkenny!
Chel. The state physicians all are met.
Come, doctor, surely you forget!
Lif. } Your honor I'll not detain.
Chel. } We must not them detain.
Chel. For riches, for power you may hope.
Lif. And should I not perform a cure, my fee's a rope.
Eli. } Fixt by valour's potent spell,
Sid. } Fortune shall its power own;
Boldly venture, all will be well,
Success is marr'd by fear alone.
Lif. My courage is lost in this curst flusteration;
Wherever I turn me 'tis all botheration.
Chel. If fair words won't do,
Then, other means I must pursue.
Lif. Stay but a minute! Ah! what shall I do?
Eli. } Fixt by valour's, &c.
Sid. }
Chel. } Botheration! I'm ruin'd—I know it too well.
Lif. }

[*Exeunt* CHEL. *and* LIF.

Enter ALMINAH *and Attendants on a terrace within the Wall.*

CHORUS.

Hither from thy rosy bower,
Where zephyrs cull the sweets of spring,
Jocund health—thy matchless power
In comfort to a monarch bring.
Rifle the poppy's scarlet pride,
For spoils to deck thy balmy wing;
Or steal a breath from Ocean's tide,
And comfort to a monarch bring.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

Sid. Ah! see the Princess! bane to my sight!
Is then Alminah the partner of my flight?
Eli. What means my love? this mystery explain.

Attendant enters.

Sid. Alas, the pain!
That wounds my heart!
Sid. } I dare not yet explain.
Eli. } In pity now explain?
Atten. This instant you must part.
No longer here remain.
Till morn you now must part!

TRIO.

SIDNEY, ELIZA, *and Attendant.*

Each throbbing heart a thousand doubts affrighting,
Nameless fears, all of fancy born:
The eventful hour, despair inviting;
We trembling wait the approach of morn.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The Battlements near SIDNEY'S *Prison.*

Enter ZEMAUN *armed with his Spear, followed by* MARGARET.

Mar. Zemaun, what means this mysterious silence? Whither would you lead me? Surely we must have ascended very high on the rock; so high that the sounds from the plain below are almost lost ere they reach us. Speak, Zemaun! your eyes roll as if you revolved some fatal purpose. Speak, Zemaun!

(ZEMAUN *raises his spear in a menacing attitude.* Oh! I am lost! Chellingoe has deceived me. Yet, has he forgotten Alminah's commands? Does he not remember that a prisoner found dead within these walls——

Zem. But if beyond these walls—You mark their height.
Hurl'd from the craggy steep, you'll seek a grave below.

Mar. Alas! for pity!

Zem. Thou see'st thy life is in my power—
Take it, and in return be grateful.

Mar. Generous Zemaun! I shall ever remember my life is your gift; and I will hold it in trust for your service.

Zem. You think I am the fierce Zemaun,
The barbarous slave of vile Chellingoe's cruelty;
But you shall know me better.

Mar. Then you are not Chellingoe's slave?

Zem. No: Heir to a distant throne, as high in dignity
As any that proud Hindostan can boast.

Mar. A prince!

Zem. Three years the climes of Asia had I traversed,
To seek instruction from the varied volume,
Where princes still will find their first, best study—
The heart of man.

Mar. There is a companion to that volume which, I suppose, you did not forget—the heart of woman.

Zem. Jester, you guess aright. Hither I wander'd,
Attracted by the charms which fame so lavish'd
Upon the princess Zelma.

Mar. Zelma! I have heard the guards sing ditties in her praise. She was the daughter of the late Rajah. Alas! I know the fatal story—The unfortunate monarch was destroyed, and not one of his family survived to claim the throne.

Zem. Yes, one remains—the lovely Zelma.

Mar. The princess living!

Zem. Starting from sleep—awaked by piercing cries,
Scaring still night with horror and despair,
I grasp'd my sword—I found the palace throng'd—
Through the assassin troops I forced my way—
Moment of terror! On my aching sight
Flash'd the dread picture of my Zelma's doom.
A haughty Moor, chief of the rebel host,
High o'er her beauteous bosom aim'd the steel.

Mar. Go on.

Zem. Heaven nerved my arm—instant he fell before me.

Mar. And you saved her?

Zem. Unknown, unheeded, through the busy throng

I brought my lovely prize; in safety placed her;
And still my watchful care preserves her life.
Mar. Then Zelma lives in concealment?
Zem. A female slave,
Who fell a victim in that night of horrors,
I caused to be entomb'd, attired like Zelma,
And boasted that my dagger bore her blood.
This won me credit in the usurper's favour;
And, as my meed, I gain'd the post of guarding
This prison, where my life, my soul resides.
Agra. (*Without.*) Zemaun!
Mar. I hear a voice.
Zem. It is Zelma's faithful servant.
Agra. (*Coming forward.*) Zemaun!
Zem. Approach! fear not, my gentle Agra. Until the evening
This friendly stranger must remain thy guest.
[*Distant music is heard.*
Mar. What sounds are these?
Zem. For sixteen years, the hallow'd grove beneath
Has on this eve, which gave my Zelma birth,
Resounded with her praise.
[ZELMA *comes forward*—MARGARET *retires.*
Zel. My Zemaun, didst thou listen to the strains
Of artless love? Didst thou hear the voice of pity
Lament thy Zelma number'd with the dead?
Ah! would it were so!
Zem. No, princess! brighter prospects court your view.
The strains of loyalty from yonder grove,
Inspired by heaven, are omens of success.
Zel. They sooth my soul with their sweet, mournful sound,
As evening breezes close a happy day,
Mingling regret with pleasure.
Zem. The people, ever faithful, ever loyal,
In secret mourn their monarch and their father.

Let but the moment come when we may shew them
Zelma, that monarch's darling and their idol;
Then shall the awful energy of virtue
Hurl the usurper from his tottering throne. [*Exit.*

SONG—ZELMA.

Happy were the days, from infancy advancing,
When by a parent's fostering power,
My youthful mind its energies enhancing,
Waked to new bliss, expanding every hour.
To the East, when the sun life and light was bringing,
Or when the western world his rising glories saw,
To the lute's dulcet sound was Zelma singing
The song of joy, Dilkusha.

Thus the opening rose-bud the nightingale was wooing,
The cruel storm arose, the bolt his bosom tore,
Ah, hapless flower! the same fate are we rueing,
Thy guardian's lost, my father is no more!
To the east, tho' the sun light and life be bringing,
Alas! the day that e'er his light I saw,
To the lute's dulcet sound when shall Zelma singing
Again the song of joy—sing Dilkusha?

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Entrance of the Prison.

Enter LIFFEY, *guarded.*

Lif. A pretty spot of work I have made of it! Come here to get another man out of prison, and have got into it myself.—(*To one of the Guards.*) Pray, my lad, how long am I to be kept here in jail?

Guard. Till his highness the great Rajah shall either die or recover.

Lif. Miserable soul that I am! O that I was in

little Kilkenny again, digging my own potatoes and feasting on buttermilk.

Guard. You have but a bad chance. The state physicians have examined the medicine you prescribed for the great Rajah, and declare it to be a deadly poison.

Lif. A deadly poison! A potatoe a deadly poison! Why, I have lived on it myself for a week together.

Enter GOVINDA.

Gov. News of the Rajah.

[*The Guard speaks to him aside.*

Lif. Now, what is the news I wonder, and what the deuce are they preparing those chains for?

[*Exit* GOVINDA *into the prison.*

Guard. I have orders to confine you more closely. You must be chained in the next apartment. The Rajah is much worse; the state physicians have declared it.

Lif. The devil relieve 'em! they'll kill the poor old gentleman in order to destroy me. Ah! two of a trade can never agree. The cowardly dogs! if they would but let him alone, and attack me in my own proper person!—I have a fine constitution. Let 'em prescribe what they will, I dare say I should survive all their remedies. I am strong enough to baffle all the powers of the healing art.

[*They chain* LIFFEY, *and take him into an adjoining apartment.*

Re-enter GOVINDA *from the prison, with* SIDNEY.

Gov. Is it possible? Do I understand you? Does not your heart own Alminah as its sovereign?

Sid. Am I indeed the unworthy object of Alminah's love?

Gov. Yes; of a passion so unbounded, that for you she quits the pleasures, the sovereignty of a court.

Sid. Unhappy Sidney! I cannot impose on the generosity of your mistress.

Gov. Then you must resume your chains. [*Exit.*

SONG—SIDNEY.

With two-fold fate is wing'd the dart
That shall my vital course arrest,
The pang that breaks my constant heart
Must rend my dear Eliza's breast.

No ray of hope can there be found!
Alas! destruction gathers round!
And the sole light that breaks the gloom,
Flashes the signal of my doom.
[*Exit into the prison.*

Enter CHELLINGOE.

Chel. Bring him forward.

Enter LIFFEY, *guarded.*

Bring the doctor this way—take off his chains.

Lif. By my soul I had rather keep them. This looks too much like an execution.

Chel. My dear friend, give me your hand.

Lif. Oh, botheration! to call yourself my friend, and get me into such a hobble! and this is the way you take me by the hand, just as I am going to be hang'd.

Chel. What does the man mean? Did not I promise to place you in an exalted situation?

Lif. Yes; and I am afraid you will now keep your word.

Chel. Why, my dear doctor, are you beside yourself? I have brought you a Khelaut, a dress of ceremony.

Lif. And does it signify in what dress a man goes through the ceremony I must perform.—(*To the*

Attendants, who prepare to put the Khelaut on him.) Oh, curse your bowing and cringing! Is the old black gentleman dead?

Chel. His highness the Rajah is not dead—he has commanded you to be brought before him.

Lif. I suppose he never saw an European hanged, and I am to gratify his curiosity?

Chel. All the court are astonished at your skill.

Lif. I don't wonder at it.

Chel. The state physicians are all disgraced, and order'd to prison.

Lif. Oh! blessed St Patrick! and is this true? Now are you humbugging me?

Chel. Dr O'Liffey, what do you mean by humbugging? You shall certainly witness the truth yourself. The Rajah is risen, and now going to give audience. You are to be introduced, and to receive his thanks. Oh, my friend! how you are to be envied! Honours, riches, pleasures await you.

Lif. By my soul they sha'n't wait long—let us begone.

Chel. You won't forget your poor friend Chellingoe when you are a great man?

Lif. What do you take me for? Forget a friend when I'm in prosperity! why that is the very time to remember him.

Chel. To say the truth, gratitude is a plant so often blighted by the air of a court—

Lif. Why, Mr Chellingoe, that may easily happen when the plant is sickly; but, rooted in an honest Irishman's heart, gratitude will flourish under any climate in the globe.

Chel. The first employments in the state are open to you. You have nothing to do but to take the turban.

Lif. Take what?

Chel. The turban.

Lif. I'll take any thing you please. My maxim always was, to take whatever I can get; and I believe that is no bad maxim to go to court with.

Chel. Keep to that, my good doctor, and you'll certainly succeed. [*Exit* LIF. *with Atten.* This fellow will most likely be appointed to some great office of trust and emolument. He will know nothing of the business, and apply to me for advice. If his measures succeed, I claim the credit of them—if they fail, the fault shall be all his own. But in either case my pockets must be filled.

AIR—CHELLINGOE.

Why let the sons of war go brag
Of the cannon's dreadful thunders,
The clinking of my money bag
Does more victorious wonders.

When a new Vizier looks sulky,
And frowns a hint for fees;
From my money-bags so bulky
March armies of rupees:

Such conquerors who can withstand?
Such friends! all glad to catch 'em,
Ever storm court-favour cash in hand,
By my soul no troops can match 'em.
Then let the sons, &c.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the Palace.

The RAJAH *discovered seated on his throne, smoking his hookah; the Women of the* ZENANA *are around him, some dancing, others playing on musical instruments and singing.*

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

Let the song and the dance
Tell love's gentle story,
Let pleasure prevail
To our famed Maha Rajah all hail!
See to battle advance,
Refulgent in glory
The lion of war,
Bright victory's star.
Let the song, &c.

From glory's career,
Turn, conqueror, here,
New victories prove,
The triumphs of love.
Let the song, &c.

Raj. Enough—enough—I shall now give a private audience to my preserver; to this most skilful European physician. Bid him hither.

[*Exeunt Women on different sides.*

Enter CHELLINGOE, *leading in* LIFFEY *sumptuously dress'd.*

Chel. Most mighty and renowned prince, may we presume——?

Raj. Ay, you may presume—so speak out.

Chel. This foreigner, the humblest of your slaves—

Lif. A slave!—What d'ye mean by that, Mr Chellingoe?

Raj. Ha, ha, ha! You speak like a bold fellow, you look like one.—I am pleased with your countenance; it is open and honest, and I was never yet mistaken in my judgment of physiognomy.

Chel. (*Aside.*) What a favourite will doctor O'Liffey be!

Raj. And although an unknown stranger, you have conferred upon me the greatest of obligations in saving my life.

Lif. I tell you what, your honour; I am a sad dog at a set speech; but upon my conscience I am heartily glad to see you so well again.

Raj. It is time you should be rewarded for the service you have render'd me. In the first place, I appoint you my chief physician.

Lif. I humbly thank your honour.

Raj. Man, don't thank me for that—'tis for my own advantage. Your skill is astonishing—your success surprises me.

Lif. (*Aside.*) I'faith, it surprises me too.

Raj. I also appoint you commander of the armies—grand judge in my civil and criminal courts—chief of my elephants—purveyor of buffaloes, and principal hunter of tigers.

Lif. Sir!

Raj. All these offices you may perform by deputy.

Chel. (*Aside to* LIF.) Now, my dear friend, appoint me your deputy; I'll take special care of the fees.

Raj. I also nominate you admiral of my fleet.

Lif. Your fleet!—why, your honour, I'm told you have no ships.

Chel. But his highness intends to build some, and there's nothing like fixing on an establishment in time.—(*Aside to* LIFFEY.) We can draw the pay and allowances in the meanwhile.

Raj. And, to shew you the extent of my gratitude, I mean to invest you with the office of vizier.

Chel. (*Aside.*) Then my fortune is made. Doctor, I'll go and get the commission ready to sign, while he is in the humour. [*Exit.*

Raj. Well, my friend, have you any thing more to ask?

Lif. Nothing for myself, your honour; but if I might say something for my friends——

Raj. Speak boldly.

Lif. I ask the liberty of my dear countrymen.

Raj. You mean our English prisoners?—You are an Englishman, I think?

Lif. I am an Irishman, which is the same thing.

Raj. The same thing! How is that?

Lif. An Irishman is an Englishman with another name. Why now, for instance, there is my brother Tady; his name is Tady, and I am Barney; my name is Barney: but then our interests are the same; and we are like my two arms, when one needs defence, the other naturally comes to his assistance.

Raj. Hold! there is one thing I had forgot: Where are those articles which were found among the stores of the English officers? Bring in one of the cases containing the bottles of liquor.

Lif. Liquor!

Raj. Yes; a sort of red liquor, which no one here had ever seen before—I want your opinion of it.

(*Two Attendants enter with a hamper of wine, and give* LIFFEY *a bottle.*

Lif. (*Aside.*) Red wine! excellent claret! and a whole hamper of it!

Raj. Well, what is your report of it?

Lif. Why surely, is it possible your highness does not know what this is?

Raj. Neither myself, nor any of my attendants.

Lif. (*Aside.*) That is lucky! (*Aloud.*) Oh, this liquor! this fatal liquor!

Raj. What's the matter? You alarm me.

Lif. This is the most deadly of all European poisons. Let no man presume to taste it.

Raj. But I have tasted it; ay, and drank some of it.

Lif. I knew that—I could tell at once you had been poisoned by it. I'll convince you. I'll describe your symptoms. You found the flavour so agreeable, you were tempted to taste it again.

Raj. So I was.

Lif. It raised your spirits?

Raj. Wonderfully.

Lif. Your eyes were soon affected—You saw double?

Raj. Double! ay, and treble too.

Lif. Every thing went round?

Raj. It did—in a general dance.

Lif. You soon fell asleep?

Raj. So I did.

Lif. Awaked rather thirsty?

Raj. I did.

Lif. And rather qualmish?

Raj. Exactly so; but your wonderful medicine cured me. Learned and extraordinary man, let me embrace you! But what shall we do with this horrible liquor?

Lif. Let it be carefully taken to my apartment; for it is useful in medicine—and I should like to try some experiments with it in this climate.

Chel. (*Aside.*) I'll secure a bottle; it may be useful

to us. A good mode of removing a private enemy—And as we are favourites at court, we shall have enemies enough. Will your highness please to affix your seal?

Raj. Yes: his requests shall be granted, his wishes anticipated. Let a Zenana be provided for him.

Lif. A Zenana!—what is that?

Raj. Yes, a Zenana—You shall have a dozen wives.

[*Goes up, and exit through, followed by* CHEL.

Lif. A dozen wives! heaven bless his honour! a dozen wives! what an establishment for an Irish vizier! If my dear wife Margery were here, I'd place her at the head of them all: I wish she were here, if it were only to see me in my new suit of regimentals. I shall never forget the first day I saw her.

SONG—LIFFEY.

When I was a mighty smart boy,
Young Margery came to our town, sir;
Oh! how I was bother'd with joy!
Like a kitten I frisk'd up and down, sir;
Calling her my sweet pearl, and following after behind her,
For her black eyes no girl could match my sweet Margery Grinder.

My mother in vain bade me work,
Nor work, eat, or sleep, could poor Barney,
So she went to old Father O'Rourke,
Told her story, and after some blarney—
"Give me advice," says she; "No friend than you can be kinder."
Father O'Rourke a sheep's eye had himself cast on Margery Grinder.

What devil has got in the place,
The folks are all mad, cries my mother;
For there's Captain Dermot M'Shean,
And that deaf lawyer Patrick his brother,
Thedy, the purblind beau, and O'Donovan blinder,
They're dancing or hobbling all after pert little Margery Grinder.

This Father O'Rourke gravely heard,
For grave was the Father though frisky—
" Mrs Liffey, says he, take my word,
(But he first took a noggin of whisky,)
" Barney will have the girl, catch her where'er he can find her;"
So, by his advice I was married next day to sweet Margery Grinder. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

The Top of the Battlements.

Enter ZEMAUN *and* MARGARET.

Mar. Well, Zemaun! any news of our second detachment?

Zem. Yes—I have this moment received intelligence of their approach—On their success depends my hope—but, without my counsel, they will inevitably fall a sacrifice. You shall bear my message to your countrymen.

Mar. Delightful! What an enterprise!

Zem. Oh! that it may be reserved for the protectors of freedom, the British arms, to rescue our nation from their tyrants; and seat a beloved sovereign on the throne!

Enter AGRA.

Mar. Well, Agra, my dear Agra!

Agra. Horses are provided in yonder wood. There you'll find a bow and quiver. On your return come to the foot of the rock, where you will now descend; and let an arrow bring us a note to signify your arrival. I will watch the fall of the welcome shaft on this terrace.

Mar. Adieu, kind Agra! The public attention is so engrossed by the Rajah's return from his favourite

tiger hunt, that full safety is allowed to all our wish'd designs.

Agra. Oh, that her success may obtain Zelma's liberty!

SONG.

Oh! that the strains of heartfelt joy
I could with graceful art employ;
But all my wild effusions start,
Untutor'd, from a simple heart.
Could I but wake the trembling string,
Whence sympathies of magic spring.
But all, &c.

Yet Zelma kind will not despise
Strains, which from purest love arise;
Although the wild effusions start,
Untutor'd from a simple heart.

SCENE V.

The Entrance of the Palace.—Enter the Rajah on an Elephant, returning from hunting the Tiger, preceded by his Hircarrahs, or Military Messengers, and his State Palanquin—The Vizier on another Elephant—The Princess in a Gaurie, drawn by Buffaloes—The Rajah is attended by his Fakeer or Soothsayer, his Officers of State, and by an Ambassador from Tippoo Sultaun in a Palanquin; also by Nairs or Soldiers from the South of India—Poligars, or Inhabitants of the hilly Districts, with their hunting dogs—other Indians carrying a dead Tiger, and young Tigers in a Cage—a Number of Sepoys—Musicians on Camels and on Foot—Dancing Girls, &c. &c.—The Scene concludes with the Zenana Chorus at page 170.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Room in the Palace.

Enter ALMINAH, GOVINDA, *and an Attendant.*

Alm. Ungrateful Sidney! reject my love?

Gov. Yes; nor will he accept his proffer'd liberty.

Alm. (*To the Attendant.*) Hasten to the English prisoner, the traitor Sidney—Let him be closely guarded till further orders. Has that foreigner, the new Vizier, been ordered to attend me?

Atten. His servant is already here. [*Exit.*

Enter ELIZA, *and throws herself at* ALMINAH'S *feet.*

Eli. Oh, pity—pity—spare the unhappy Sidney, my dearest friend, and once honour'd master!

Alm. (*Aside*). His servant and attached friend!—(*To* ELIZA.) Presumptuous youth, dost thou perceive thy danger in becoming thus the advocate of a traitor?

Eli. I fear no danger when Sidney's life is at stake.

Alm. Wilt thou dare listen to a fatal secret, which if betrayed, thy life becomes the forfeit?

Eli. I dare encounter all you dare propose.

Alm. Know then, I love this Sidney.

Eli. Does he return your love?

Alm. My pride struggles against the answer. No; he disdained my love—I offered to fly with him.

Eli. And he refused the offer?

Alm. He disgraced me by a refusal. But he shall never live to triumph in my disgrace. Perhaps your persuasions——

Eli. My persuasions shall be exerted with fervency.

Alm. If you succeed——

Eli. Doubt not my success—Sidney regards me—he will listen to my advice—I will be the companion of your flight.

Alm. But I have a rival.

Eli. Fear her not—She is at this moment a wretched wanderer, as uncertain of his destiny as of her own.

Alm. Then go to Sidney's prison. This ring will be your passport every where. No subject in these dominions will be hardy enough to question its authority.

Eli. (*Aside.*) Then I shall save my beloved. [*Exit.*

Enter LIFFEY.

Alm. You are tardy in obeying my commands—but no matter, I am now fully informed.

Lif. Then your highness has seen my servant?

Alm. I have; and cannot but admire so warm an attachment to an unfortunate friend.

Lif. You admire the attachment! Oh joy! Oh blessed St Patrick, what a day is this! Oh, your highness, you have done a good action—you have made two lovers happy. Though my servant, as you call her, has told you more than you would have heard from me.

Alm. How?

Lif. Why, do you think that I would have informed you that her name is Miss Eliza Ardley, that she is now the wife of Captain Sidney, and that, under

the disguise of my servant, she has risked her life to release her husband?

Alm. And is all this true?

Lif. True!—why, can you doubt the dear girl's veracity? But if she had not told you the story herself, racks and tortures should never have forced it from me. I was always remarkable for keeping a secret.

Alm. Senseless wretch! But I ought to pardon your simplicity, since it yields me the pleasure of revenge.

Lif. Revenge!

Alm. Their hateful passion shall be extinguished in the grave. Let what has passed be seal'd within your lips. Reveal it, and you die!

Lif. What the devil! condemn'd without a trial?

Gov. Dare not question the orders of Alminah; her command is our law.

Lif. The orders of the princess your laws! Ah, sir, there is the difference. In my country the monarch and the meanest subject are bound and protected by the same laws.

Gov. Be silent, and remember where you are.

Lif. Faith I wish I were any where else. It seems very odd that we should find the value of the blessings of home, by looking for them abroad, where they are not to be found. But it is very true; and well may they say in our little kingdoms, that a man should travel to know the worth of his own country and its constitution. [*Exit.*

Alm. (*Comes forward.*) Unhappy Alminah!

SONG—ALMINAH.

Sorrow befriending,
Tears their aid lending;
With anger contending,
Still love rules my breast.

Rage my soul firing,
Vengeance retiring,
Soon will expiring
Love's triumph attest.
Trembling before him,
Doom'd to adore him!
Sorrow befriending, &c.
[*Exit with Attendants.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in the Prison.

Enter ZEMAUN *and* SIDNEY.

Zem. At length relenting heaven with pity
Looks down on suffering virtue!
Yes, gallant Sidney! with prophetic ardour
We hail the approach of Britain's warlike bands
To raise my Zelma to the throne she merits.

Sid. A generous task!—Worthy the sons of freedom!

Eli. (*Without*). Where is my Sidney?

Zem. Hold! some unusual visit to the prison excites alarm.

(ELIZA'S *voice is heard, she rushes into the prison, and swoons in* SIDNEY'S *arms.*)

Sid. My Eliza!—how is this miracle?

Eli. Oh, my Sidney! I would fain relate the eventful story; but overwhelming joy—let us begone—the night will carry us beyond pursuit. Mark me! (*To* ZEMAUN.) You know this ring?

Zem. I do; and respect whatever command it is to enforce.

Eli. Let the gates be instantly unbarred.

Zem. Amazement! power most absolute attends this ring—
No matter how obtain'd. Then why shou'd Zelma
Await precarious chance for her release,
While instant preservation courts acceptance?

Enter ZELMA, *who is presented by* ZEMAUN *to* ELIZA.

Behold the victim of Oppression's hand!
'Tis yours to give a royal captive freedom.

(*Trumpets.*

(*A noise is heard: Guards with torches appear with* ALMINAH; *they seize* SIDNEY *and* ELIZA. ZEMAUN, *alarmed, causes* ZELMA *to retire, and follows her; she drops her bracelet.*—ALMINAH *enters with* GOVINDA *and* ORSANO, *followed by Attendants with torches.*

Alm. Presumptuous slaves!—Drag them to instant death.

(ORSANO *takes up the bracelet dropped by* ZELMA, *and presents it to* ALMINAH.)

Alm. What's this? A bracelet!—and from no vulgar arm!—
Ha! poison to my hopes—It bears the marks
Of royalty! A thousand dreadful visions
Affright my fancy.—Zemaun, how is this?
Explain! Zemaun not here! Bring him forth!
The traitor!—search the prison!

(*Exit* GOVINDA.

QUARTETTE.

Eli. Trembling before you—ah, let compassion
Beam on the wretched, lost and forlorn!
Sid. Say, can a captive raise indignation,
Sport of misfortune, to misery born!

Alm. Treachery merits just indignation;
The traitors I punish, the treason I scorn.
Eli. and Sid. Trembling before you, &c.
All. Terrors surrounding,
Doubts confounding,
Cast around a dreadful gloom,
And hide in awful mists our doom.

Enter GOVINDA.

Gov. (*To Alm.*) Proud Zemaun is captive—in vain his resistance—
The traitor is seiz'd, your command is his fate.
Alm. Rewards shall be yours for this welcome assistance;
Then vengeance is mine, and shall Zemaun await.
Gov. These keys on Zemaun found, secreted with much care,
Some mystery declare— [*A short Symphony.*

ZEMAUN *brought in by Guards.*

Zem. Your power I dare
In despite of these chains,
Unconquer'd still my soul remains.
Alm. My vengeance obey.

CHORUS.

Your vengeance we obey.

At a sign from ALMINAH, ZEMAUN *is forced off by the Guards.*

Sid. For blood, hark! the fiends of revenge loudly call;
Eliz. To hope then, adieu! for the victims must fall!
Alm. and the rest. For blood, then, while justice and loyalty call,
To mercy adieu! for the victims must fall!
Alm. My vengeance obey!

CHORUS.

Your vengeance we obey.

(ALMINAH *commands* GOVINDA, *in dumb-shew, to take the keys and search the prison;* GOVINDA *and some Guards retire, and are seen behind, lighting up the prison wherever they go;—a symphony.—Then*

Zel. (*behind.*) Ruin, alas, is nigh!
Whither shall the wretched Zelma fly?

(*After a further symphony,* ZELMA *rushes forth and throws herself at* ALMINAH'S *feet.*)

Zel. If love has ever touch'd thy breast,
Pity a lover most distress'd!
Sid. Nay, then, relentless woman, here
A princess claims her safety—Fear,
Nor raise a sacrilegious hand,
Thy sovereign see before thee stand.

CHORUS.

Terrors in vain surrounding,
Doubt no more confounding;
All your tortures strait prepare,
Our only shield is now despair.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Gallery.

Enter CHELLINGOE.

Chel. This red poison of Doctor O'Liffey's has a most delicious scent; it tempts one so to try the flavour. If the Doctor should succeed in his experi-

ments to render it harmless, what a blessing it will be!

Enter an Attendant.

Atten. More treachery, Chellingoe.

Chel. What have you got there?

Atten. Another proof of Zemaun's treason. An arrow just now shot into the fort by an unknown hand—it fell on the terrace before me, near Zemaun's apartment.

Chel. On the terrace near Zemaun's apartment! Let me see the arrow.

Atten. Here is a note fastened to it.

Chel. And addressed to Zemaun!—(*Reading*)—"Your faithful friend is punctual to her appointment." Her appointment! A female friend. Ha, ha, ha! treason indeed! Ah, your poor head! to mistake an assignation for a treasonable billet.—(*Reads*) "She waits at the foot of the rock."

Atten. I know the place. (*Exit.*

Chel. So do I—a retired situation, fitting for the vows of lovers. There is a subterraneous passage to it, communicating with the prison, and known only to myself.——"She waits at the foot of the rock." 'Tis a pity she should wait in vain. Suppose I go to her myself; as her lover is in prison, and cannot keep his appointment, it will be charitable and polite to make his apologies for him—I'll go—upon my soul I'll go. I hope she's a young woman—I've been long enough plagued with an old one.

SONG—CHELLINGOE.

An old maid had a roguish eye,
And she was call'd the great Ramchoondra,
She was rich, but poor was I,
Fal lal lal de ral, &c.
When we married, she had fears
She soon shou'd die—and shed some tears,

But the tough old lass lived thirty years,
Did my wife old Ramchoondra.
Fal lal lal de ral, &c.

Whene'er a pretty girl was nigh,
Then this plaguy old Ramchoondra
Watch'd me with a jealous eye,
Fal lal lal de ral, &c.
She had but one eye, it is true,
But that was large enough for two,
And it glanced upon me all askew,
Did the eye of old Ramchoondra;
Fal lal de ral, &c.

At last my old Ramchoondra died,
Then I call'd her dear Ramchoondra;
With decent grief I sobb'd and sigh'd,
Fal lal lal de ral, &c.
For several hours I sobb'd, till chance
Popt in my head a favourite dance,
The jig awaked me from my trance,
So adieu to old Ramchoondra!
Fal de ral, &c.

SCENE IV.

The foot of the Rock upon which the Fort is situated

Enter MARGARET.

Mar. The noise is ceased—That gloomy light which tinges the high battlements marks Zelma's dungeon! I sink with fatigue. It is fortunate I sent my message while I had strength to direct the messenger—And the arrow was well aimed—It certainly fell on the terrace. I faint with thirst and weariness—Oh, Liffey! shall I ever see you again?

Enter CHELLINGOE *from a secret passage in the rock.*

Chel. All is hush'd—not a leaf stirring—What an evening for an assignation! So delightfully silent and dark.

Mar. No signal yet.

Chel. She speaks. What an inviting languor in her voice! but, query, is it from fatigue or tenderness?

Mar. Oh! Zemaun, where are you?

Chel. In prison, bright angel of light! But, instead of Zemaun, I am here.

Mar. Chellingoe!

Chel. She knows my name.

Mar. Oh! support my fainting steps.

Chel. In my arms, most lovely and adorable!—

[MARGARET *comes forward, draws a pistol, and takes him by the arm.*

Margaret! is it you? How could you survive your fall?—Are you really alive or not?

Mar. You tremble—Is it with love or fear?

Chel. Bless me!—I am so astonish'd—I'll step into the fort and procure you assistance.

Mar. No, Chellingoe, you shall not quit me. (*Shews a pistol.*)

Chel. The same tigress as ever.

Mar. I faint with thirst.

Chel. (*Aside.*) The luckiest thought in the world! Liffey's poison will settle the business.—(*To her.*) How fortunate that I should have a bottle of cordial in my pocket—I'm sure it can't be better applied—(*She seizes the bottle of wine, and drinks.*) That's right—don't be afraid of it.—(*Aside.*) Now I think all is safe—How are you now?

Mar. Better. (*Drinks again.*)

Chel. Better! How can that be?

Mar. Quite recovered, Chellingoe; you have saved my life.

Chel. Saved your life!—What, by a dose of poison?—(*Aside.*) Oh, my unlucky tongue!

Mar. Indeed!

Chel. (*Aside.*) She does not know what it is;—that's lucky!

Mar. And pray, honest Chellingoe, who gave you this excellent cordial?

Chel. Our new vizier, who is a great Irish physician—Doctor O'Liffey.

Mar. Doctor Liffey! (*Aside.*) It is my dear, brazen Barney.

Chel. Now the poison takes effect. (*To her.*) Do you know the vizier?

Mar. Know him! why, he is—but no matter what he is—you must shew me to him instantly.

Chel. (*Aside.*) Mad! furious mad! (*To her.*) I'll step and acquaint him.

Mar. No, sir:—Halt! Front! (*Holds him, and points her pistol at him.*) You must return with me into the fort. Come, sir—I shall keep close in the rear—I must shew you the lock-step.

Chel. You are very good. (*Aside.*) I hope I shall in return shew you the lock-up step presently.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

The same Gallery as before.

Enter CHELLINGOE *with* MARGARET.

Mar. Where are we now, Chellingoe?

Chel. At the door of the vizier's apartment—I'll take care he shall receive you properly. (*Aside.*) A

silly wench! little does she think that the doctor will order her for immediate execution. [*Exit.*

Mar. (*Alone.*) Oh! If I should have the happiness of giving poor Liffey his liberty.

Lif. (*Without.*) Botheration, Mr Chellingoe, what is it you mean?

Mar. My husband! then I fear nothing.

Re-enter CHELLINGOE *with* LIFFEY.

Chel. Here, my lord, is the tigress.

Lif. Eh! What! No—it is not—Yes it is!

Mar. Barney!

Lif. Margaret!

Mar. The same—Present arms!

Lif. That I will, and salute my commanding officer. So, come to my embrace, long-lost sultana of my heart!

Chel. Well, that is the strangest lock-up step I ever saw. [*Exit.*

Lif. Oh, Margaret, I am in such a botheration of joy!

Mar. My dear Liffey, let us think of escaping.

Lif. What, run away again?

Mar. Our brave detachment is arrived, and waiting in yonder wood to storm the fort.

Lif. Waiting to storm the fort! Oh! I'm a lucky dog, to live to see this day——No—I'm an unlucky dog—I had forgot the prisoners—my poor master!

Mar. And my poor mistress.

Lif. I am a lucky dog again. I forgot that I have her prison under my command, ay, and Zemaun's prison too—

Mar. Zemaun shall head our army, and then huzza for glory!

DUET—LIFFEY *and* MARGARET.

Mar. High on the rock methinks our troops we form,
Still high above the enemy appears.
Lif. Now pressing on—the fort prepared to storm,
Ever in front the gallant grenadiers.

Mar. Though bullets rattle round,
No shot from our merry men is heard.
Lif. With bayonets fix'd advancing,
Their volley waits the word:

Steady our charge—it follows quick our fire;
Now we pursue, their broken ranks retire.
Conquest is ours, the sons of freedom cry!
Mar. Triumph shall mark the tabor's sprightly sound;

Lif. See, on their walls the British colours fly,
Mar. While with the dance we beat the conquer'd ground.
Lif. Then drink a toast and sing—
By my soul, we'll all so merry merry be;

Mar. Here's our Country and our King,
With three times three!
Both. All the delights from victory that spring,
Friendship, and love, and wine, and mirth shall bring.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

ZELMA'S *Prison.*

Enter ZELMA *and* AGRA.

Agra. Oh, madam! the garrison are alarmed.—Did you hear their drums beating to arms?

Zel. May heaven watch over my Zemaun, and protect the defenders of a just cause!

Agra. Fear not. The noise comes from the distant part of the fort, where the British soldiers make a false attack—All is silent here—See, madam, our gallant friends on this side have nearly reached the summit of the rock undiscovered.

Zel. Hark! Again!

SONG—ZELMA.

Hark! the fatal voice of war
From the cannon clamours round:
Trembling echoes from afar
Faintly waft the dreadful sound.

Mark, how our firm and faithful band
With patient valour, silence keep:
My Zemaun's whisper gives command,
As they climb the awful steep.

SCENE VII.

The Outside of the Fortress.

Enter ZEMAUN, *leading the British Troops.*

Zem. Here pause awhile—A faithful slave, to whom I have given liberty, will fire the signal when all is ready for our attack.

AIR—ZELMA.

To heav'n my fervent pray'rs shall rise,
That conquest prove your valour's prize.

CHORUS OF SOLDIERS.

Our valour an artifice aiding,
Like the tiger his hunters evading,
We wait for the moment to rush on our prey.
Mark the signal!—we obey.

(*The attack commences, and the British Troops storm the Fort.*)

FINALE.

Joy shall swell the choral strain,
Loyalty and truth to prove;
Gratitude in Freedom's fane
Shall hail the monarch of a people's love.

Sacred to Freedom's glorious cause,
Britain the sword of justice draws;
A lesson to the admiring world:
Oppression from his seat is hurl'd.

Sid. Beneath the shade of blooming laurels
The gallant victors shall recline;
Lif. And to keep laurels ever blooming,
They shou'd be water'd well with wine.

CHORUS.

Joy shall swell the choral, &c.

[*Exeunt.*

THE

LAW OF LOMBARDY,

A

TRAGEDY:

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

BY

ROBERT JEPHSON, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PALADORE,	*Mr Smith.*
King,	*Mr Bensley.*
RINALDO,	*Mr Packer.*
ASCANIO,	*Mr Hurst.*
LUCIO,	*Mr Farren.*
Senator,	*Mr Chambers.*
Shepherd,	*Mr Wright.*
Foresters,	*Mr Wrighten.*
	Mr Fawcet.
Squire to PALADORE,	*Mr Phillimore.*
BIRENO,	*Mr Henderson.*
Princess,	*Miss Younge.*
ALINDA,	*Mrs Robinson.*

THE

LAW OF LOMBARDY.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in the Palace.

Enter BIRENO *and* ALINDA.

Alin. I wonder not you should suspect me slow
In this strange office: had you but enjoin'd me,
Shut out the sun ten times his annual rounds,
Feed all my life on pulse, or with coarse weeds
Obscure the little grace which Nature's hand
Has lent my outside, then, without a wherefore,
(From the meek humbleness of love I bear you)
My obedience would have follow'd.

Bir. Sweet impatience,
Smooth that contracted brow——

Alin. But to commend

To any other woman those fond vows
I hoped to own unpartner'd, is it less
Than to expect my tongue, suborn'd, should plead
Against the dearest interest of my life,
And make me earnest for my own undoing?

Bir. Must I again call down the saints to witness,
That for convenience only, not from love,
I seek to wed the princess? My ambition
Aims at the crown, her dower; were that bright gem
Heir'd by a pigmy, the mere mock of sight,
By idiot drawling, and a shrew's perverseness,
No less should I desire it. If I prosper,
My heart, as ever, shall be thine; and hers,
The dull legitimate languor of the husband.

Alin. But when to royal state Sophia joins
Such rare endowments, as make doubtful strife
'Twixt Nature's gifts and Fortune's; can I hope
More than some grateful note from memory,
How much Alinda loved you?

Bir. Trust me, fair one,
Beauty's degrees are in the lover's fancy,
Not in a scaled perfection. Varying nature
Has lineaments for every appetite:
Not her arch'd brows, nor stature Juno-like,
Her crisped tresses spun from finest gold,
Nor the intelligent lustre of her eye,
To me have half such charms as thy soft mien,
The pure carnation of thy dimpling cheek,
And unassuming sweet simplicity.——
But hast thou urged my suit?

Alin. Spite of ourselves,
The tongue interprets from the abundant heart.
Bireno's image filling all my thoughts,
Could I be silent on a theme so loved?

Bir. And how does she receive the gentle tale?

Alin. Sometimes she chides, and sometimes smiling tells me,
But that she knows me wise, such lavish praise

Might hint a heart touch'd deeply, and ill suits
The sober preference of an humble maid,
Who cannot hope to call you hers in honour.
Then with discreetest lessons will she school me,
To guard my breast 'gainst love; forgetting still
How much she wants the counsel she bestows.

Bir. Does she then love?

Alin. She never told me so;
But signs far more significant than speech
Reveal it hourly.

Bir. Let me know my rival,
Though my foreboding heart already whispers
It must be Paladore.

Alin. Oh, rightly guess'd!
Her love for him makes her unjust to you.

Bir. Curses o'ertake him! Near his brighter fires
My star shines dimly; I was wonder'd at
Till this new meteor shot across men's eyes,
And drew all gaze to follow. At our tournaments
He foils me like a novice; in grave council
I prate unmark'd, while hoary heads bow down
In reverence to his weighty utterance;
And thus the upstart heresy of opinion
Runs on this smooth impostor.——By what signs
Take you this note of her affection towards him?

Alin. By such we women deem infallible.
If unexpectedly she hears him named,
Sweet discomposure seizes all her frame;
Suffusion, softer than Aurora's blush,
Spreads o'er her beauteous cheek. If she expect
His presence at the court, studious to please,
Beyond her wonted elegance of dress,
With nicer care she counsels at her glass,
To make the daintiest workmanship of nature
By ornament more winning.

Bir. Indications
That speak, and shrewdly; yet their vanity
To catch the flattery of the fool they scorn,

Will bait such hooks as these. Have you no proof
More unequivocal?

Alin. What would you more?
We reason from ourselves, looking within,
We find in our own breasts the according springs
Of motions similar; when first I loved,
So did I wish to please, so doubt my power.
Yet more than this; her eye still follows him,
And when the unwelcome hour of parting comes,
The cheerful flame that lighted up her countenance
Expires; sighs heave, and a soft silent tear
Steals down her cheek.

Bir. Enough, I'm satisfied
She loves him, and the frost of my reception
Conspires in proof. Now then, my best Alinda!
You must assist me; on this single push
Hang all my fortunes—If my rival wed her,
Farewell my hopes, my country—

Alin. How! your country!
A voluntary exile for the loss
Of one you swear you love not——

Bir. My possessions,
The means of pleasure to my thriftless youth,
Moulder in confiscation; thus my dukedom,
My royal ancestry, and rank in the state,
So scantily supported will but mock me.
A marriage with the princess would heal all.
But if I fail, I will not stay to see
Upstarts made rich by my inheritance;
Nor the proud finger of the slave I scorn
Point at the princely beggar.

Alin. Oh, good heaven!
Devise, command—Can my best industry
Prevent this ruin? Tell me but the means,
And bid me fly.

Bir. No more of jealousy,
But with appliance dext'rous call her thoughts
To me, and my deservings; speak with slight

(Yet not as by suggestion) of my rival.
I've known more way made in a woman's grace
By such confederate arts, than could be won
By a long siege of amorous enginery,
Soft flatteries, sighs, protestings infinite,
And all the fervor of impatient love.
Alin. But should this fail!
Bir. I'll spread a finer snare,
Subtle as fabled Vulcan forged in Lemnos,
To enmesh them: thy soft hand, my dear Alinda!
Must help to hold the toils—
Alin. But see, she comes;
The king too and her lover—
Bir. I'll retire,
And seek thee presently: rivet thine ear
Meantime to what they utter: thy report
Shall somewhat shape my course.—High-flighted fool!
Check thy bold soaring, else my hot revenge
Shall melt thy waxed plumes, and hurl thee down
To a devouring sea that roars beneath thee. [*Exit.*
[ALIN. *retires.*

SCENE II.

Enter King, Princess, PALADORE, *and Attendants.*

King. You shall no more, Sophia, to the chase;
This morning's danger makes my blood run cold.
Had not thy well-sped lance, brave Paladore,
Pierced the huge boar that gored her foaming horse,
These eyes, now raised in thanks to heaven and thee,
Had wept her lifeless.
Pal. Ever praised be Fortune,
That placed me near her! Since a common feat
That daily dyes our weapons, thus ennobled
By blest conjunction with her precious safety

I would not change for the best garland won
By Cæsar's conquering sword.
Prin. We are not nice
In dangers imminent to chuse the means
Of our deliverance; yet, believe me, sir,
More than for life preserved, I thank the chance
That made you my preserver. Th' unwelcome hand
Rendering us service, like sharp frost in sunshine,
Chills the fresh blossom of our gratitude,
Which else uncheck'd would put forth all its sweetness.
King. I have much serious matter for your ear;
[*To* PAL.
Our helms must be laced close, our swords new-edged
'Gainst fiercer foes than these rude foresters,
That make us sport with peril.
Pal. By my life!
My cruel heart beats high to give it welcome;
For virtue's test is action.
King. Thus my paper:
(Brief its contents, but fearful) Burgundy,
Stung by refusal of my daughter's love,
Stirs up commotion 'gainst our kingdom's peace;
And soon the golden grain of Lombardy
Shall be trod down beneath the furious heel
Of peasants cased in iron.
Prin. Heaven avert it!
For sure 'twere better I had ne'er been born,
Than live the fatal cause why war's rude blast
Disturb'd the quiet of my father's age,
Which soft repose should foster. The grieved people
Will chide your gentleness, that did not bend
My heart to this obedience; and your virtue,
Seen through th' unwelcome colour of the event,
For reverence find upbraiding.
King. No, Sophia!
I would not violate the meanest right
Of my least subject, for the fear or promise

Of any issue. Is my child, my daughter,
(Sweet, duteous, amiable, born free and royal)
Less charter'd from oppression than a stranger?
A self-invited wooer here he sojourn'd,
To thrive as your approving gave him licence:
I fed him not with promise, you with hope,
Nor shall audacious menace e'er extort
What courtesy denied him.

Pal. To his teeth
Hurl your defiance, king! 'tis proud to threaten,
But baseness to be awed by it. From my breast
I'd tear these hallow'd symbols, give this steel
To be a baby's play-thing, could my heart,
Distrustful of the event, forebode one fear,
To cast black presage on a cause so noble.

King. Thou gem of Britain! Dear in my esteem
As wert thou native here, be Pavias' shield
Her pride, her pillar; yes, our hardy files,
Led on by thee, shall drive the boaster back,
To mourn at home his baffled preparations.

Pal. Oh, would the fortune of this glorious strife
Hung on my arm alone!

King. Our daughter's hand
Is destined for a prince who draws his blood
From the same source as mine, our kingdom's heir,
(Did not this sweet prevention stand between)
To bless Bireno with two matchless gifts,
Her beauty and a royal diadem.

Prin. Bireno, sir!

King. Even he, I know his worth—
But is there poison in my kinsman's name?
It pales the healthful vermeil of your cheek,
Dims your bright eye, and veils your wonted smiles.

Prin. Alas! I cannot speak—

King. Why then, hereafter
Will better suit this subject. Sir, farewell!
We shall expect your aid to counsel with us,
What present mounds our wisdom best may raise

'Gainst this loud torrent that at distance roars,
Ere it rush down to spread its ruin round us. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Princess and PALADORE.

Prin. Oh, stay, and hear me now! Alas! he's gone
Who smiles on me, and kills me: bids my heart
Be traitor to itself, yet with soft words
Fetters my tongue, which free, would boldly answer!
Such kindness but destroys me.
Pal. My soul's idol!
I was indeed presumptuous to believe
These humble arms were destined to enfold
So vast a treasure, yet aspiring love
Hopes things impossible.
Prin. Bireno! He!
I'd rather waste my life in singleness;
Like the pale votarist, pour faint orisons
At the cold shrines of senseless marble saints,
And wear the eternal pavement with my knees,
Than at the sacred altar load my soul
With holy perjuries, to love the man,
At whose approach my heart alarm'd shrinks back,
While thought confirms instinctive Nature's hate.
Pal. See, like a haughty conqueror he comes;
Pleasure and pride on his exulting brow,
At distance speak his triumph.
Prin. Arm me, disdain,
To meet the bold intruder!——Gentle Paladore!
'Tis thus thy rival woos me. Courtship's season
Is the short date of woman's sovereignty.

For liberty, we have but in exchange
The little tribute of a lover's sighs,
His humble seeming, and soft courtesy;
Yet these he thinks too rich a sacrifice,
And owns no advocate but pride in love.

SCENE IV.

Enter to them BIRENO.

Bir. Confirm'd, fair princess! By the king's command
You see me here a joyful visitant.
'Tis not unknown why warlike Burgundy,
Spreading his hostile banners to the wind,
Makes sword and fire his dreadful harbingers.
Prin. The cause I have heard——But on.
Pal. (*Aside.*) Down, swelling heart!
Bir. Your yet unplighted hand gives to this war
Its edge and colour; to remove that prize
Beyond the invader's reach, my sovereign's wisdom
Deems the best means to blunt his hostile sword;
Therefore on me he deigns——
Prin. I understand;
But have no present ear for such a theme.
My father's goodness left my choice unforced
Of one unwelcome suitor; the same justice
Secures me from compulsion in a second.
Bir. And must I bear this answer to the king?
Prin. Myself will be my own interpreter,
And save your trouble. Once more, sir, I thank you.
[*To* PAL. *and exit.*

SCENE V.

BIRENO *and* PALADORE.

Bir. Well! go thy ways, woman's epitome!
Beauteous enigma! Who would solve you rightly
Must thus interpret: make your outward semblance
An index pointing to its contrary.
When your smooth polish'd vizors beam in smiles,
Displeasure's at your hearts; the moody brow
Tells inward sunshine; tears are joy, not sorrow;
You sooth where you approve not, and look gall,
When sweet content honies your appetites.

Pal. These common railings 'gainst that gentle sex,
Denote his humour more who utters them,
Than their defect, or any deep conception.
But you have chosen a season for hard thoughts
Rebukes your censure; still the chamber's air
Winnows her balmy breathing; from our eyes
Scarce glides her beauteous form, when your dark spleen,
As venom'd things suck poison from sweet flowers,
Finds matter for distemper's nourishment,
And food for calumny in excellence.

Bir. Her form indeed is fair.

Pal. Ay, and her mind
(If more can be) more fair, more amiable.
Thy never-render'd snow-cold Appenine
Is not so free from taint, as from offence
Her spotless bosom; yet has she a tear,
Healing as balm for others' frailties,

That makes remission heavenly; sweet persuasion
Hangs on her words with power oracular,
To shame the cynic's chiding—Spirit of truth!
She is thy visible divinity,
And 'tis thy reverence to pay homage to her.
Bir. 'Tis to my wish (*Aside.*)—I grant her well endow'd
And in fair seeming most pre-eminent;
But for these other virtues you have named,
They are of different climes, and earlier ages;
Our Pavias ladies, cast in earthly mould,
They make the most of nature's liberal gifts,
Put pleasure out to usury, and love
As ease, convenience, or the moment sways them.
Pal. You're pleasant, lord!
Bir. No, soberly thy friend.
Shall I be plain?
Pal. What call you your past measure,
Was it a courtier's strain!
Bir. You love the princess?
Pal. And heaven may be beloved—
Bir. Ay, and hoped too;
For heaven has many mansions, and receives,
Too large for limitation, all deservers;
But in a lady's heart, there's but one place,
Though many may contend for't; therefore, friend,
Waste not your precious sighs, which might enkindle
Bright sparks of equal love in some soft breast
Destined to mate your fondness, in hopeless wooing.
Search not the cause; believe me, on my truth,
'Tis past all reckoning hopeless.
Pal. Nothing's hopeless,
Though deeds, untried, oft seem impossible;
And craven Sloth molting his sleekless plumes
With drowsy wonder views the advent'rous wing
That soars the shining azure o'er his head.
What will not yield to daring? Victory

Sits on the helm whose crest is confidence;
And boldness wins success in love's soft strife,
As in the dangerous din of rattling war.

Bir. How could I make me sport were I light minded,
Were I malignant; mischief, from this mood,
That runs so contrary to all sober sense—
But here I rest in kindness—Be advised,
Push not a desperate purpose; by my life,
The princess loves you not.

Pal. I'll bear no more—
Matchless audacity! Let me take thee in
From crown to toe, walk round thee, and survey thee
Like a prodigious thing; for such thou should'st be,
To put my course of love in circumscription,
And school me, like a boy, with unsought precept.

Bir. Lovers are sick with fevers of the brain,
Diseased by airy hope, high-flighted fancy,
Imaginations bred from self-conceit;
An arch deluder, which presents the Juno
Their frenzy grasps at, with a zone unbound;
While, like Ixion's mistress, the coy queen
Slumbers on golden beds in high Olympus.

Pal. Hear me, proud duke! had I no other spur
But thy forbidding; were there no incitement
From her transcendent beauty: did no beam
Shoot from her eye to light eternal love
At passion's altar: were she swart and froward,
(Oh, blasphemy to think it!) in despight,
I would assume an unfelt extasy,
Invoke her name, till echo should grow faint
With the perpetual burden, and devise
All means of contradiction, to proclaim
Scorn of thy council, and defiance to thee.

Bir. Then hear, to dash thy pride, since thus you urge me.
My experience of her lightness, well she knows,
Would freeze me as her husband, and her hand

(Which, but to save appearances, I ask)
I would reject, if offer'd; so her craft
Sooths you with feign'd endearments. As a mistress,
I find her worth my holding; but a wife,
Fit for a prince, must come with better gifts
Than amorous blood and beauty—Nay, but mark me—
Pal. Trust not too far the reverence of this place—
Away—thou yet art safe—my sword once drawn—
Bir. Am I so lost in your esteem, you hold me
(Your friend profess'd) in malice capable,
Or falsehood thus to wound you?
Pal. Both, by Heaven!
Bir. And will maintain this thinking?
Pal. With my life.——
Bir. 'Tis a deep venture—Mine, upon my truth—
When full-orb'd Phœbe wheels her fleecy car
To silver yon blue concave, 'midst the pines
That wave their green tops o'er the battlement
Of her night-chamber, in the garden meet me
Alone: when we encounter in that place,
You there shall listen to conditions meet
For both our honours. So till then farewell. [*Exit.*
Pal. (*Alone.*) I'll meet thee, be assured I will.
Gird on thy keenest edge: if thou hast aught
Unsettled in this world, dispatch it quickly;
We stand upon the utmost verge of Fate,
And one, or both of us, must plunge for ever. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

BIRENO *alone.*

Bir. The wise should watch the event on fortune's wheel,
That for a moment circles at the top,

And seized not, vanishes—I must about it,
My all's at stake—Ye ministers of vengeance,
That hide your gory locks in mist-hung caves,
And roll your deadly eyeballs o'er the edge
Of your insatiate daggers, shaking ever
Dews of oblivious sleep from your stung brows,
Receive me of your band! ne'er to know peace
Till this keen writhing vulture quit my heart,
And with blunt beak, and flagging wings outstretch'd,
Drowse o'er the mangled victims of my rage.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Chamber.

Princess alone.

Oh, blessed, most blessed are the insensible!
In the mild zone of calm indifference,
No hatred chills them, and no passion burns;
To feed, and sleep, and do observance due
To the stale ritual of quaint ceremony,
Fills up the humble measure of their hope;
Smooth and unruffled glides their temperate stream,
And one day rounds their whole life's history.

Oh, had my heart been such! but nature poised
In distribution, when she gives the touch
Alive to extacy, in like extreme
Subjects the sense to anguish: the same soul,
That in the hope of wedding Paladore,
Enjoy'd its sum of bliss, with equal pain
Averts me from his rival: thus entranced
'Twixt love and fear, I feel the pangs of both,
And the sharp conflict rends me. Ha! my father!
Now comes the trial.

SCENE II.

King and Princess.

King. How! in tears, Sophia?
Come, 'tis not well—I fear, I guess the cause.
This morn I did but hint a purpose to you,
Of import, dear to your own happiness,
And your changed brow reproving my intent,
Cut short my free discourse.
Prin. Oh, good my lord!
I am not practised to conceal my thoughts
(And least from you) by casting o'er my looks
The unalter'd vizor of tranquillity,
When perturbation, like a sleepless guest,
Forbids my bosom's quiet.
King. I have loved thee
With fondness so unbated, that 'twere needless,
For confirmation, to attest by words,
What all my thoughts, my life's whole carriage towards thee,
Have set beyond the question.
Prin. Oh! to me
Your love has been like those perpetual springs

"That ever flow," and waste not! my least wish
Scarce had its birth, ere its accomplishment
In your preventive kindness.

King. Since 'tis so,
If chance the current of my present will
To your's run contrary, you must not deem
That merely to enforce authority,
Or wake controulment, which might sleep to death.
In its disuse, I now expect the course
Of your desires should lose themselves in mine,
Or flow by my direction.

Prin. As my father,
The giver of my life, I reverence you;
Next, as your subject, my obedience stands
Bound by the general tie; but since your power
Has still been temper'd so with lenity,
That even the stranger's cause, with patient hearing,
Is weigh'd ere you determine; I, your daughter,
May hope, at least, an equal privilege,
With favour in my audience.

King. I were else
Unnatural, withholding from my child
What aliens claim by justice. Give me hearing—
The Duke Bireno loves you, has my promise
That, like a well-graced advocate, my tongue
Shou'd win your gentle favour to his suit,
Urging such commendations of his love,
As modesty, though conscious of desert,
May wish you hear, yet cannot speak itself.

Prin. Ah, sir! forbear, he knows my heart already,
Already has he heard, from my own lips,
I cannot love him; poorly he engages
Your honour'd combination, in a league
That (whatsoe'er its issue) must conspire
To wound your daughter's peace.

King. By heaven, you wrong him.
To wound your peace! He seeks your happiness,

And so am I his second.

Prin. But these means
Are adverse to the end; for if I wed him,
(This is no raving of rash ecstacy)
On death, that only can dissolve my chain,
Will hang my future hope: as eagerly
As the poor weary sea-beat mariner
Pants for the shore, so shall my outstretch'd arms
Embrace the welcome terror. My refusal
To you, the gentlest, kindest, best of fathers,
Must seem repugnance harsh, and o'er my duty,
Before untainted, casts the sickly hue
Of pale suspicion; thus begins his love,
Fearful to me in each alternative.

King. Why, this is infant rhet'ric, to protest
The impulse of a strong antipathy,
Which never causeless sways the human breast,
Yet give no reason why.

Prin. Alas! to feel it,
O'er-masters every reason. Need we search
To ground aversion on weigh'd argument,
When instinct cuts the tedious process short,
And makes the heart our umpire?

King. Hear me calmly—
My days are almost number'd: this white head
Bears not in vain its reverend monitors;
Time puts a tongue in every hoary hair,
To warn the wise man of mortality:
When I am gone, behold thy single state
Unhusbanded, unfather'd, stands exposed,
Ev'n as the tender solitary shrub,
On the bleak mountain's summit—Every blast
May bend or break thy sweetness: this strong fence,
This union, would enroot its shelter round,
And, like a forest, shield thee.

Prin. Let me hope
A stronger fence in a whole people's love:
Their grateful memory of my father's virtue,

And loyalty hereditarily mine,
Descending, like the sceptre, to your issue.
King. Think'st thou, my aspiring kinsman, whose ambition,
Impatient, waits till my declining beam
Give place to his meridian, who already
Wins from my side a moiety of my court,
By his succession's hope, will tamely view
That sceptre wielded by a woman's hand,
Nor wrest it from thy grasp? No, my fair kingdom!
I see the meeting torrents of contention
Deluge thy peaceful vales, while her weak sex,
Unable to direct, or stem the tide,
Will be borne down, and swept to ruin with it.
Prin. These evils, but in possibility,
May never come: but, oh! 'tis certain sorrow
To promise love, obedience, duty, honour,
When the heart's record vouches 'gainst the tongue:
It changes order's course; the holy tie
Of well-proportion'd marriage still supposes
These bonds have gone before; nor is there power
Creative in the simple ceremony,
The seed unsown, to give that harvest growth.
King. Here break we off—To sue, and sue in vain,
But ill becomes a father: may my augury
Be more in fear than wisdom. Hold; to-morrow
The council meets to scan this threaten'd war:
The people call it thine: then be thou present
To thank and animate their zeal to serve us. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Prin. (*Alone.*) I shall attend your order. This cold parting
Speaks his displeasure; and my heart, accustom'd

To the kind sunshine of approving smiles,
Droops at the chilling change. Ye gentle breasts,
Strangers as yet to love, be warn'd by me.
Soft as the printless step of midnight sleep,
The subtle tyrant steals into the soul:
Once seated there, securely he controuls
The idle strife of unimpassion'd ties,
And laughs to scorn their sober impotence.
As feeble vassals lift their arms in vain,
In the unequal conflict soon o'erthrown,
They prove their weakness, and his power supreme.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Garden.—Night.

RINALDO *alone.*

He must pass this way: through the postern gate
That leads here only, with distemper'd pace
I saw him hasten. Since the evening banquet
His wild demeanour "*has put on more change*"
Than yonder fickle planet in her orb.
Just now he seiz'd his sword, look'd at, and pois'd it,
Then girt it round him, while his bloodshot eye
And heaving bosom spoke the big conception
Of some dire purpose. There is mischief towards—
I may perhaps prevent it—these tall shrubs
Will hide me from his view.—Soft, soft, 'tis he.
[RINALDO *retires.*

SCENE V.

PALADORE *alone.*

Why do I shake thus? If indeed she's false,
I shou'd rejoice to have the spell unbound
That chains me to delusion. He swears deeply:
But bad men's oaths are breath, and their base lies
With holiest adjurations stronger vouch'd
Than native truth, which, center'd in itself,
Rests in its simpleness; then this bold carriage
Urging the proof by test infallible,
The witness of my sight. Why these combined,
(Spite of my steady seeming) viper-tooth'd
Gnaw at my constancy, and inward spread
Suggestions, which, unmaster'd, soon would change
The ruddy heart to blackness. But, Oh, shame!
These doubts are Slander's liegers.—Sweetest innocence!
That now, perhaps, lapt in Elysian sleep
Seest heaven in vision, let not these base sounds
Creep on thy slumber, lest they startle rest,
And change thy trance to horror.—Lo, he comes:
Yon light that glimmers 'twixt the quivering leaves
(Like a small star) directs his footsteps hither.

SCENE VI.

Enter to him BIRENO, *with a Lanthorn.*

Bir. Your pardon, sir; I fear I've made you wait—
But here, beneath the window of his mistress,
A lover favour'd, and assured like you,

Must have a thousand pleasant fantasies
To entertain his musing.
Pal. Sir, my fancy
Has various meditations; no one thought
Mix'd with disloyalty of her whose honour
Your boldness wou'd attaint.
Bir. Then you hold firm,
I am a boaster?
Pal. 'Tis my present creed.
Bir. 'Twere kind, perhaps, to leave you in that error.
The wretch who dreams of bliss, while his sleep lasts,
Is happy as in waking certainty;
But if he's rous'd, and rous'd to misery,
He sure must curse the hand that shook his curtain.
Pal. I have no time for maxims, and your mirth
Is most unseasonable. Thus far to endure
Perhaps is too much tameness.—To the purpose—
Bir. With all convenient speed. You're not to learn,
We have a law peculiar to this realm,
That subjects to a mortal penalty,
All women nobly born (be their estate
Single or husbanded) who to the shame
Of chastity, o'erleap its thorny bounds,
To wanton in the flowery path of pleasure.
Nor is the proper issue of the king
By royalty exempted.
Pal. So I have heard.
But wherefore urge you this?
Bir. Not without reason.
I draw my sword in peace. Now place your lips
Here on this sacred cross. By this deep oath,
Most binding to our order, you must swear,
Whate'er you see, or whatsoe'er your wrath
From what you see, that never shall your tongue
Reveal it to the danger of the princess.
Pal. A most superfluous bond!—But on; I swear.

Bir. Hold yet a little. Now, sir, once again
Let this be touch'd.—Your enmity to me,
If by the process it should be provoked,
Must in your breast be smother'd, not break out
In tilting at my life, nor your gage thrown
For any after quarrel. The cause weigh'd,
I might expect your love: but 'tis the stuff,
And proper quality of hoodwink'd rage,
To wrest offence from kindness.

Pal. Should your proof
Keep pace with your assurance, scorn, not rage,
Will here be paramount, and my sword sleep,
From my indifference to a worthless toy,
Valued but in my untried ignorance.

Bir. So you determine wisely. I must bind you
To one condition more. If I make palpable
Her preference in my favour, you must turn
Your back on Lombardy, and never more
Seek her encounter.

Pal. By a soldier's faith!
Should it be so, I wou'd not breathe your air
A moment longer, for the sov'reignty
Of all the soil wash'd by your wand'ring Po.

Bir. Summon your patience now, for sure you'll need it.

Pal. You have tried it to the last: dally no more,
I shiver in expectance. Come, your proofs.

Bir. Well, you will have them. Know you first this writing? [*Gives a paper.*

Pal. It is the character of fair Sophia.

Bir. I think so, and as such received it from her,
Convey'd with such sweet action to my hand,
As waked the nimble spirit of my blood,
Whispering how kind were the contents within.
This light will aid the moon, though now she shines
In her full splendour. At your leisure read it.

Pal. (*Reading.*) Kind words indeed; I fear, I fear too common.

Bir. It works as I could wish.—How his cheek whitens!
His fiery eye darts through each tender word
As it would burn the paper.
Pal. (*Reading.*) "Ever constant"——
Let me look once again. Is my sight false?
Oh, wou'd it were! Fain wou'd I cast the blame,
To save her crime, on my imperfect sense.
But did she give you this?
Bir. Look to the address.
Pal. Oh, darkness on my eyes! I've seen too much.
There's not a letter, but like necromancy
Withers my corporal functions. Shame confound her!
Bir. As you before were tardy of belief,
You now are rash. Behold these little shadows.
These you have seen before.
[*Producing two Pictures.*
Pal. What's this, what's this?
My picture, as I live, I gave the false one,
And her's she promis'd me! Oh, woman's faith!
I was your champion once, deceitful sex!
Thought your fair minds—But hold, I may be rash—
This letter and these pictures might be your's
By the king's power, compelling her reluctant
To write and send them; therefore let me see
All you have promis'd.—You expect her summons
At yon Miranda—
Bir. Yes, the time draws near;
She ever is most punctual. This small light
Our wonted signal: stand without its ray;
For shou'd she spy more than myself beneath,
Fearing discovery, she'll retire again
Into her chamber—When her beauteous form
Breaks like the moon, as fair, though not so cold,
From yonder window.
Pal. Ha! by hell it opens!—
Bir. Stand you apart a moment. While I climb,
Yon orb, now braz'd to this accustom'd scene,

Will shew you who invites me. I'll detain her,
To give you ample leisure for such note
As counterfeits abide not. [BIRENO *retires.*

SCENE VII.

PALADORE *alone.*

Death! 'tis she!
There's not a silken braid that binds her hair,
One little shred of all that known attire
That wantons in the wind, but to my heart
Has sent such sweet disturbance, that it beat
Instinctive of her coming, ere my sight
Enjoy'd the beauteous wonder.—Soft! What now?
See she lets down the cordage of her shame,
To hoist him to her arms. I'll look no more—
Distraction! Devil! How she welcomes him!
That's well! that's well!—Again: grow to her lips—
Poison and aspics rot them! Now she woos him,
Points to her chamber, and invites him inward.
May adders hiss around their guilty couch,
And ghosts of injured lovers rise to scare them!—
Ay, get you gone—Oh, for a griffin's wing,
To bear me through the casement! Deeds like this
Shou'd startle every spirit of the grove,
And wake Enchantment from her spell-hung grot,
To shake the conscious roof about their heads,
And bare them to the scoff of modest eyes
Twined in the wanton fold. Oh, wretch accurs'd!
See there the blasted promise of thy joys,
Thy best hopes bankrupt.—Do I linger still?
Here find a grave, and let thy mangled corse,

When her lascivious eye peers o'er the lawn,
Satiate the harlot's gaze.

[*Going to fall on his sword,* RINALDO *rushes out and prevents him.*

Rin. What frenzy's this!
Arm'd 'gainst your life! In pity turn the point
On your old faithful servant, whose heart heaves
Almost to bursting to behold you thus.

Pal. Hast seen it then?

Rin. I have seen your wild despair;
And bless'd be the kind monitor within
That led me here to save you.

Pal. Rather curs'd
Be thy officious fondness, since it dooms me
To lingering misery. Give me back my sword—
Is't come to this? Oh, I cou'd tear my hair!
Rip up this credulous breast! Blind dotard! Fool!
Did wit, or malice, e'er devise a legend
To parallel this vile reality!

Rin. Disgrace not the best gift of manly nature,
Your reason, in this wild extravagance.

Pal. And think'st thou I am mad without a cause?
I'll tell thee—'Sdeath! it choaks me—Lead me hence—
I will walk boldly on the billowy deep,
Or blindfold tread the sharp and perilous ridge
Of icy Caucasus, nor fear my footing;
Play with a fasting lion's fangs unharm'd,
And stroke his rage to tameness.—But hereafter,
When men wou'd try impossibilities,
Let them seek faith in woman.—Furies seize them!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Hall.

BIRENO *alone.*

Her death must be the means. If these be crimes,
Thou bright Ambition, whose rare alchemy,
Like Midas' palm, turns all it grasps to gold,
Give them thy glorious splendour! What a coil
Does puny conscience make in little minds,
Ere they o'erleap obstruction! Fear, not virtue,
Keeps mankind honest. Each inordinate wish
Is guilt unacted, and the canon points
More 'gainst the coward heart, that wou'd and dare not,
Than the bold deed, that braves the penalty.

SCENE II.

BIRENO *and* ASCANIO.

Welcome, Ascanio! Thanks for this kind speed
To meet my summons. I have business for thee
Worthy thy subtle genius; thou shalt aid me

To spread a banquet forth, where two sharp guests,
Ambition and Revenge, shall both be feasted,
Even to satiety.

Asc. I will not pall
Performance by protesting. Is there aught
In which a pliant tongue, and ready hand,
(No despicable engines) may do service?
To their best cunning use them; your poor bondman
Will think himself much honour'd in obedience.

Bir. I have profess'd myself thy friend, Ascanio!
And when the golden autumn of my hopes,
(Whose rich maturity I now wou'd hasten)
Is ripe for bearing, thou shalt taste the fruit
That bends my swelling branches.

Asc. I have lived
The creature of your bounty; and my life
I would cast from me, like a useless load,
When to your gracious ends unprofitable.

Bir. My means have hitherto been poor and scanty,
My power confin'd; but I shall be, Ascanio,
Like a great river, whose large urns dispense
Abundance to the subject rills around him,
Till they o'erpeer their banks.

Asc. Oh, my good lord!

Bir. I'll trust thee as I know thee—for a villain.—
[*Aside.*
Place thyself near me when the council meets,
(I shall make matter for them they foresee not)
Whate'er I urge, or whomsoe'er I charge,
Be ready thou with the grave mockery
Of uplift eyes, thy hand thus on thy breast,
And heaven-attesting oaths to second me.

Asc. Prime in the catalogue of mortal sins,
I hold unthankfulness, and a friend's need
Makes fiction virtue when its end is kindness.

Bir. To give more ready credence to the imposture,

Put on reluctant seeming; earnestly
Entreat, they urge you not; sadden thy brow,
And cry, "Alas! compel me not to speak—
"I know not what I saw." Mumble some cant,
"Of frailty, and compassion, sins of youth,
"The danger of the law, if it were urged
"'Gainst all transgressions:" thus shall thy declining
Be eked out to a stubborn certainty
In each suspended hearer.

Asc. Nay, my lord;
Disparage not the good gifts were born with me,
To think I can want schooling for this office.

Bir. I pray you pardon me.——Oh, Nature! Nature! [*Aside.*
There is a pride even in stark villainy,
Which flattery's heat must soften, ere the metal
Bend to our purposes.—Come this way with me,
The hall will soon be throng'd; what more remains
I will impart within.—No ceremony. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter LUCIO *and an Officer.*

Offi. See where they pass; what bodes that conference?

Luc. Danger, my life on't. That smooth knave Ascanio
Is the duke's crucible, his breast receives
The mass of his crude projects, and his brain,
A subtle fire, refines the drossy ore,
To bear the ready stamp for present mischief.

Offi. The duke of late grows past his custom courteous,

Joins hands with us, and calls us by our names,
Gives praise, and largess to the soldiery,
Whom he was wont to style, state-caterpillars,
Burthens of peace, and but endured in war
As necessary evils.

Luc. It denotes
(Or I lack charity) trouble to the state.
I know him proud, subtle, and pitiless;
Nor will his nature change these elements,
However for a season he put on
A smoother guise, and fashion suitable
To the end he aims at.

Offi. Best conceal these thoughts,
For one day he may rule us.

Luc. Ay, that *may*,
If I mistake not, he will snatch from chance,
And make a certainty. But see the king.
The providence of heaven be ever round him!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Enter King, Counsellors, Knights, and Attendants.

Health to your majesty!

King. Thanks, gentle friends!
But why this faintness in your salutations?
Why wear your brows that ominous livery?
I trust our gallant spirits will not palter,
Because a rash invader threatens us.
When I was young as you, to hear of war
Made my blood dance: but these good days are past,
This sapless trunk shrinks from its mail'd bark;
Yet age has still its use, count me your steward,

Holding the honours of the state in trust
For all deservers. [*Seeing the Princess.*] Behold my daughter! she shall better thank you.

SCENE V.

Enter to the above, Princess and Attendants.

More retribution dwells in beauty's smile,
Than in whole volumes of an old man's praise.
Approach, my child! Come, grace thy father's side:
These are thy champions; give your women tasks,
Bid all the looms of Pavia ply their labours,
A scarf for every warrior, they'll deserve them.
Prin. They will not want my thanks, nor such poor tokens
How much I prize their worth; their high-touch'd virtue
Finds in itself the source and end of action;
Secures its right to praise, but scorns to take it.

SCENE VI.

To the above, BIRENO, ASCANIO.

King. Welcome, my cousin! Doubt not of my zeal;
Though ill has the success kept pace with it,
To speed your amorous suit, still let us hope,
Time, and your fair pretensions, will have weight
To win her to our wishes.
Bir. Let it pass;
I must take comfort: women's appetites

Will be their own purveyors. Are we met?
The hall, methinks, seems full.
King. Where's Paladore?
He had our summons, yet I see him not:
His skill in war, and wisdom to advise,
Have been most tutelary to our realm,
And well deserve the waiting.
Bir. Take your place;
He cannot now be present; when we are seated,
I will declare the reason.
Prin. (*Aside.*) Ha! not present!
What fatal bar prevents him? Oh, my heart!
Is Paladore the fountain of thy life,
That thy stream scarce can flow, when sever'd from him?

[*They take their places; the Princess on the King's right hand, a little beneath him;* BIRENO *and* ASCANIO *in the front of the Stage; some seated, others standing round.*

Bir. The danger of our frontiers, you sage lords,
Calls this assembly; but, as wise physicians,
The heart being touch'd, neglect the extremities,
Giving their first care to the seat of life:
So now, the wounded vitals of our honour
Demand our prior tendence.
King. Speak, good cousin!
Do dark conspiracy, and home-bred treason,
(Unnatural leaguers with a foreign foe)
Bid the sharp sword of vengeance turn its edge
'Gainst our own children?
Bir. Yes; though nature bleeds,
Justice will take her course: I see before me
The prime of the kingdom; and from some among you,
Since they, in whose authority abides
The executive of power, best can tell,
I now wou'd hear, why do our registers
Contain that rigorous ordinance, which respects

The chastity of women?
1*st Sen.* To that question
The law's preamble answers. 'Tis rehearsed,
That the wild licence of our countrywomen
O'erleapt all modest bounds. Sweet pudency
(That ruby of the sex) had been cast by
For casual wantonness, till our name abroad
Became a by-word, and confusion, strange,
Disturbed domestic peace. A spurious issue,
The slips of chance and wildness, were engrafted
In rich inheritances, while the sire
Caressed the child, not his, and left to fortune,
The true heirs of his fondness: these abuses
Required an iron curb; so passed the law,
Making transgression death, with no remittance
To high rank, or degree in the offender,
But in its bloody gripe comprising all.
Bir. And is this so allowed?
1*st Sen.* 'Tis so allowed:
Nor is there a decretal, in our rolls,
Of less ambiguous import, or more known.
King. This is beyond divining: I have marked
[*To the Princess, half aside.*
His changing feature: some strong passion shakes him.
Prin. He plays emotion well, most masterly,
Even to the life of feigning.
Bir. May I on?
Or must I, like a novice to your forms,
First prove my right of audience?
King. Be not angered;
We questioned not your right—All counsellors
Speak what they list with freedom. You, our cousin,
Have, with your right, pre-audience.
Prin. Pray proceed.
Bir. (*To the Senator.*) Most learned lord, now please you to recite
The dangerous predicament of those

Who do awake this statute.
1st Sen. Willingly.
'Tis there provided, that, the accused being cited
In the king's presence, he who brings the charge
Should state each circumstance: that done, the herald
Thrice in six hours, first, in the market-place,
Next, in the hippodrome, last, in the porch
Of the great temple, must invite all knights
(Whether impell'd by pity, love, or justice)
To appear her champions in the marshal'd lists:
There, if the accuser falls, she is held free,
And her fair fame restored; but, if he conquers,
The event confirms her guilt, and the sharp axe
Severs the wanton's life.
Bir. Then in this peril
Stand I at present—Bid your trumpets sound;
And call forth every bold adventurer,
To try what desperate valour may achieve
'Gainst truth, and my keen sword.
King. But whither would'st thou?
Suspense and horror sit on every brow;
Like the red comet, thy denouncing eye
Forebodes disaster.
Bir. Oh, relentless justice!
If these be drops of weakness, let them fall:
'Tis the last tribute of a human sorrow,
And now I am wholly thine.
King Pr'ythee, go on.
Bir. 'Twere vain to waste your patience in persuasion;
I would not wantonly play with the fangs
Of such a lion law, whose terrible roar
Must be appeas'd with blood—So rests my truth.
A lover's fondness, last night, prompted me,
Attended by this gentleman—[*Pointing to* ASCANIO.
Asc. Curs'd chance!
Oh, would the darkness of the delving mole

Had been my portion; then I had not seen—
What have I said? Nay, do not call on me;
Was it for this I was commanded hither?
I'll close my lips for ever.

1st Sen. We have ways
To force a necessary truth—My lord,
Please you, proceed—The rack shall make him answer.
Have eye upon him—He was your companion.

Bir. He was, he was, when love or destiny
Led me a wanderer, in the palace garden,
To gaze upon the window of the princess.
When, oh, sad object for a lover's eyes!
The casement open'd, and the full-orb'd moon,
Bright as the radiance of meridian day,
Shew'd me a lusty rival in her arms,
Embracing, and embraced——

[*All rise from the Table.*

King. Shame! Death! Confusion!
My daughter! Oh, my daughter!

Prin. Host of heaven!
Does no deep thunder roll, no lightning flash?
Can the tremendous couriers of your wrath
Sleep o'er this perjury?

Bir. My gage is thrown;
And here I stand to answer with my life,
If I have charged her falsely.

Asc. (*Kneeling.*) On my knees,
If ever pity touch'd your noble breast,
I beg you speak no more.

Prin. (*To* Asc.) Thou vile confederate
Of his bloody-thirsty malice! Have I lived
To hear a wretch suborn'd, his sycophant,
Mock me with intercession? (*To* Bir.) I behold thee,
And scorn so struggles with astonishment,
That my full heart, and intercepted tongue,
Almost refuse their active offices;

Till passion's choak'd in silence.
King. Powers of mercy!
Am I reserved for this? My only child,
The pride, the joy, the treasure of my soul,
My age's cordial, and my life's best prop,
In the sweet spring, and blossom of her youth,
Thus blasted in my sight!—(*To* BIR.) But, oh, dark fiend!
Whom hell lets loose to spread destruction round thee,
Why does thy vengeance fasten upon me?
Have I deserved this from thee? Well thou know'st
I strove to make her thine; I would have given thee
My crown, and daughter. Thou requit'st my love,
By daggers steep'd in poison to my heart.
Bir. I thank thy kindness, and forgive thy rage;
The father shall have licence—Honour, witness!
Nor malice, nor ambition loosed my tongue,
To this heart-rending office. Reverend lords!
Let your unclouded wisdom judge between us.
Prin. Can I be patient? Most abandon'd ruffian!
Thou scoffer at all ties! with the same breath
That violates a virgin's sanctity,
(Holy and pure beyond thy gross conceiving)
Thus conscious of thy lie, darest thou invoke
Honour to witness for thee? Wherefore call
On these to judge between us? See, barbarian!
Amazed, and struck with horror, they have heard thee;
Too well, thou know'st, they must pronounce me guilty;
Thy oath must be their law: but there is One,
An unseen Judge, an all-discerning eye:
Now if thou dar'st look up, poor shivering wretch!
He views the dark recesses of thy soul:
Tremble at him thy judge!
Bir. I were a slave,
Fit for abuses, cou'd I tamely bear

To see the rich reversion of my blood
Seized by a base and spurious progeny,
An alien Briton, in his sport of lust,
Stamping a brood of illegitimate kings,
To bend our necks to bastard tyranny.
King. An alien Briton!
Bir. Bid her answer thee,
Call for her paramour, her Paladore.
Say, why is he not present?
Prin. Why indeed!
Hast thou not practis'd on his precious life?
And to consummate this day's guilt and horror,
Crown'd perjury with murder?
King. Paladore!
Search, find him out; put pinions to your speed,
And bear him to our presence.
Bir. Spare your labour——
Fear will outstrip their haste—The dastard's gone;
He had my challenge for this injury,
And answer'd it by flight.
King. Confusion! fled!
Am I then doubly wretched? Must she die?
And die dishonour'd too?
Prin. (*Kneeling.*) All-seeing Heaven!
If e'er thy interposing providence
Dashed the audacious councils of the wicked;
If innocence, ensnar'd, may raise its eye,
In humble hope, to thy eternal throne,
Look down, and succour me! I kneel before thee,
Distrest, forlorn, abandon'd to despair,
By all deserted, and my life beset;
The man, my soul adores, traduced and wrong'd:
Yet, oh, there is a pang surpassing all!
While the envenom'd rancour of this fiend
Casts its contagion on my spotless fame,
And, unrebuked, persists to blast my virtue.
Bir. Hear, she avows her love——
Prin. Yes, glory in it——

King. Ha, have a care, rash girl! nor turn my grief
To curses on thy head—Dar'st thou confirm
Thy doubtful infamy?
Prin. A love so pure,
What bosom might not feel, what tongue not own?
It was a fault to hide the secret from you:
But are such sighs as vestal breasts might heave,
Such spotless vows as angels might record,
Pollution worthy death? These are my crimes;
And if I labour with a guilt more black,
May the full malice of that villain reach me!
King. What can I think? His absence—Yet thy truth,
Thy nature's modesty plead strongly for thee—
Away with doubt—Oh, thou obdurate heart!
Bir. We trifle time—The lists must be prepared,
The heralds sound defiance——
Prin. Hold a moment—
I'll tell thee how to arm thee for the combat:
Steep thy keen sword in poison, that no balm
May heal the wounds it gives, but each be mortal;
Let a staunch blood-hound, with devouring fangs,
And eye-balls fiery red, couch o'er thy helm;
The deadly sable of thy mail besmear'd
With scaffolds, wheels, and engines, virgin's heads
Fresh bleeding from the axe's severing stroke:
Scorn thou the mean device of vulgar knights,
Who fight for what they reverence, truth and honour;
But be profess'd their champion whom thou servest,
And write in bloody letters, hell and falsehood.
Bir. This passion, lady, ill becomes your state:
Shame is wash'd out by sorrow, not by anger.
King. Hence, from my sight, detested parricide!
Assassin! butcher! lest these feeble hands,
Braced by my wrongs to more than mortal strength,
Fix on thy throat, and bare thy treacherous heart.
Bir. Old man, I go—Compassion for thy grief
Forbids me to retort these outrages.

Let frenzy take its course—When next we meet,
Summon thy fortitude; and learn, mean time,
Crowns cannot save the wearer from affliction,
But kings, like meaner men, were born to suffer.
[*Exeunt* BIRENO, ASCANIO, *and Senators.*

SCENE VII.

King and Princess.

King. Morality from thee! He braves high heaven,
And well may scorn my anger. Oh, my child!
This little hour, while I can call thee mine,
Close let me strain thee to my bursting heart:
Alas! thy aged father can no more
Than thus to fold thee; pour these scalding tears,
And drench thy tender bosom with his sorrows.
Prin. By my best hopes of happiness hereafter!
To see that reverend frame thus torn with anguish;
To hear those heart-fetch'd groans, is greater misery,
Than all the horrors of the doom that waits me:
I could put on a Roman constancy,
And go to death like sleep, did no soft sorrow
Hang on the mourning of surviving friends,
And wake a keener pang for their affliction.

SCENE VIII.

Enter to them LUCIO.

Luc. Forgive the obedience of reluctant duty!
I have the council's order to commit
The princess to a guard's close custody.
King. Thou art my subject, Lucio! and my soldier;

Do thy unhappy master one last service;
Draw forth thy sword, and strike it through my heart.

Prin. No: let our grief be sacred: if we weep,
Let them not see, and triumph in our tears.
Martyrs have died in voluntary flames,
And heroes rush'd on death inevitable,
By faith inspired, or glory. Thou, Sophia!
Sustain'd alone by peace and innocence,
Meet fate as firmly, and transcend their daring.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Forest.

Enter PALADORE, RINALDO *following.*

Pal. Am I the slave of sense, that know her fickle,
Ungrateful, perjured, yet still dote thus fondly?
Faith, prudence, honour, govern'd appetites,
(Whose everlasting bonds make passion wise)
In her were only seeming, or like ornament

Thrown by, or worn at pleasure ; then this sorrow
Hangs on her outside only, that's unchanged,
For falsehood did not dim her radiant eyes,
Her cheek was damask'd with as pure a rose,
Her breath as odorous, when she most deceived,
As when her virtue, like her specious form,
Seem'd spotless, and unparagon'd.

Rin. My lord !
Court not this solitude, speak out your grief;
Mine is no flinty breast ; this dangerous spleen,
That makes your bane its nurture, then shews worst,
When, nothing spent in loudness and complaint,
Like a deep stream it rolls its noiseless way,
Mining the banks in silence.

Pal. Wou'd the pain
Vanish with the exposure of the cause,
I shou'd make blunt the patience of your ear
By endless iteration. But why tell thee ?
Think'st thou there is a charm in soothing words
To pluck the sting from anguish ? Good Rinaldo,
Thou hadst a son and lost him.

Rin. True, I had so.

Pal. See there, his very name provokes thy tears.
Say, can wise counsel stop them ? Shall I tell thee,
The lot of mortals is mortality ?
That fate will take its course, 'twas Heaven's high will ;
And man is born to sorrow ? This is wise ;
The sum of consolation. Strains like these
Flow smoothly from the tongues of moralists,
Patient as sleep in others sufferings,
But vex'd as wasps and hornets in their own.

Rin. From these imperfect starts I cannot answer,
They speak but passion. If my guess deceive not,
A woman sure has wrong'd you.

Pal. A true woman ;
I thought her angel once, most basely wrong'd me.
Yet if revenge kept measure with her shame,

I cou'd wash out in her polluted blood
This stain to modesty. Yes, fair falsehood!
Shou'd I appeal thee of the incontinence
My blasted eyes have witness'd, the stern law
Wou'd give me ample vengeance.
Rin. Your great spirit
(Whoe'er she be that thus has injured you)
Wou'd scorn your reparation from that law,
The shame even of justice.
Pal. Fear not; still she twines
Here round my heartstrings. No, let late remorse,
For sure it will o'ertake, punish her sin.
But hie thee back to Pavia presently,
Dismiss my attendants, (useless pageantry
To my now alter'd state!) send hither to me
My arms and horses; these may hasten death
Fitting a soldier; then return and seek me.
A little longer will I hold in life,
Till, in requital of her father's kindness,
I render some brave service. 'Midst these oaks,
Till you return, I'll keep my lonely haunt.
Rin. There stands an humble hamlet in yon glade,
Own'd by some simple peasants, who supply
The western suburbs with such homely fare
As their few fields afford; thither bestow you,
And take some nourishment. I will return
With my best diligence.
Pal. Go, get thee gone.
Sorrow's my food; I'll drink my falling tears.
Ye savage denizens of this wild wood,
Gaunt wolves, and tusky boars! No more my hounds
Shall dash the spangled dew-drops from your brakes!
No more with echoing cries, or mellow horn,
I'll rouse your dreadful slumber! Sleep securely—
With disposition deadly as your own,
I go to mingle with you. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

Enter two Foresters.

1*st For.* This place will suit our purpose, 'twere lost time
To lead her further; so we but dispatch her,
No matter for the spot. The deed once done,
The duke will not be nice, but pay us nobly.
2*d For.* Half of our hire's to come. How shall we do it,
Stab her, or strangle?
1*st For.* Make this cord her necklace:
Blood may beget suspicion. When she's dead,
We'll drag her body to yon hazel copse,
And leave the maws of wolves to bury it.
There's scarce a bush in this green labyrinth
But is familiar to me. Many a traveller,
When I was master of as stout a gang
As ere defied the law, here has paid down
His life in conflict for the gold I wanted,
And never more was heard of.
2*d For.* Sound your horn.
I told her, we'd a little on before
To give our horses forage, and directed
Her way to follow; shou'd she miss the path,
Her ear will be her guide.—See, Carlo! see,
The pretty innocent, caught by her eye,
Stops for a while to pluck the velvet bells
That blow beneath her feet, then forward bounds,
Light as the roe, till some fresh floweret
Lures her again.
1*st For.* Ay, like the lamb that plays,

And crops his pasture, in the butcher's eye,
Even while the knife's a-whetting.——Hush! She's here.

SCENE III.

Enter to them ALINDA.

Alin. Beneath a rugged thorn I found this flower
Blushing unmark'd its odorous life away;
I'll wear it in my breast, and all who see
Will praise its beauty, modest worth's sweet emblem,
That first must be conspicuous ere 'tis prized.—
Oh, you are there? I'm ready, my good guides!
Where is our equipage? The way's but short,
We shall be there ere moonshine.

1*st For.* Pretty lady!
You have a longer journey than you wot of,
And a dark dreary road to travel through.

Alin. Why then the duke deceived me, for he said
The way was pleasant, and the distance nothing.

2*d For.* We have help'd many forward the same way,
And all were much averse to travel it.

Alin. They had no lover to obey like me,
For I am light, and were it ten times further,
To please my lord I'd go it blithesomely.
Come, come, to horse.

1*st For.* Are you prepared to die?

Alin. Mercy defend me! How? Prepared to die!
'Tis a strange question.

1*st For.* But most seasonable;
As fit as if your couch were spread at midnight
To ask if you were weary. With our will

We do it not, for we were gently bred,
And housed with gallants once: but this rough trade
Necessity enforces.—Come, prepare!

Alin. What do you search for? And why turn you pale?

You make me shake, to see your stedfast eye.
Does this become the servants of the duke,
To frighten whom they shou'd protect from fear?

2d For. We are indeed the servants of the duke,
For we receive his hire; then for your fears,
We mean to rid you of them by your death.

Alin. Can this be sport? Alas! What have I done,
That such detested thoughts shou'd rise in you?

1st For. You are troublesome. Our business is to kill you.

If you have a ready prayer, and brief, kneel there,
And say it presently. We run great hazard
To let you live so long.

Alin. I'll kneel to you,
Make you my saint, if you'll have mercy on me.
I never injured you, nay, cou'd not injure,
For till this hour that I was made your charge,
I never saw you. Do not turn away.
Think how you'll answer this to him whose love
Trusted me to your care. He will require
A strict account.

2d For. Pr'ythee let go my arm.

Alin. May I not know why you do wish to kill me?
If for these sparkling bawbles, take them freely;
Rob me of all, but do not murder me.
I am not fit to die.

1st For. We need not thank you
For what you can't withhold. Fall to your prayers.

Alin. But are you not the servants of the duke?
Think how you swore to tend me faithfully,
How he enjoin'd you, as you prized his favour.
Ev'n in your looks he'll read this cruelty,
And find how you have abused him. Think on that.

1*st For.* 'Twere pity she should die in ignorance.
Caught in the falcon's pounce, the dove as well
Might gurgle to the kite to stoop, and save her,
As you cry to Bireno. Know, 'tis he
Who laid this snare, and pays us for your blood.

Alin. The Duke Bireno?

2*d For.* Yes, the Duke Bireno.
You have been privy to some passages
Require concealment. Being wise, he thinks
They are safest when you are dumb, so gives us gold
To stop your blabbing. If you doubt our word,
Peruse that paper. Are you satisfied?

[*Shews a paper.*

Alin. Yes, if 'tis satisfaction to be torn
With worse than death ere death, I'm satisfied.
But yet you will not kill me.

1*st For.* There's no end.
She'll prate us from our purpose. Bind her arms.
All strife is vain.

Alin. Oh, sir! yet hold a moment;
You murder more than one. An innocent pledge
Of my disastrous love leaps at my side,
And joins his speechless prayer.

2*d For.* And not his wife!
Why then your head's a forfeit to the law,
And we but take before, what sport or malice
Might make you render at the bloody block,
With process more afflicting.

Alin. Barbarous villains!
Is there no help? Oh, spare me!—With my cries
I'll wake the dead.

2*d For.* Dispatch her with your dagger.
Be quick.

1*st For.* 'Tis done. [*Stabs her.*

SCENE IV.

Enter to them PALADORE.

Pal. Sure 'twas the scream of woe——
A woman struggling! Villains, loose your hold!
Dogs! hell-hounds! [*He drives them out and returns.*
Alin. (*Fainting.*) Oh!
Pal. Guilt has the wings of wind,
My sight can scarce o'ertake them. On the ground!
I came too late to save her. Hearts of stone
Might feel compunction sure to mar a form
So soft and fair as this. Thou beauteous marble,
Forgive my tardy succour! Here's a mould
So delicate, 'twere worth a miracle
To give it second life. I've seen this face.—
Ha! as I live, 'tis she; the beauteous girl
That waited on the princess. Soft! the blood
Steals to her cheek again, the azure lids
Begin to open.
Alin. Oh!
Pal. Look up, sweet maid!
Alin. Bless me! Where am I?
Pal. Safe from violence,
Nor in a stranger's arms.
Alin. Your voice is gentle.
But will you save me from these barbarous men,
Should they again return? I tremble still,
Still feel their ruffian gripe, nor can believe
I yet am safe, though I no more behold them.
Pal. They are fled far: but, ah! thy side is pierced;
Nor does this houseless solitude afford
The chance of timely succour.

Alin. Heaven is just,
(For now I know you) since it bids me die,
Weeping for pardon at your injured knees;
For I have basely wrong'd you.
Pal. Wrong'd me! How?
All who have ever served, or loved that false one,
As they bring back her irksome memory,
I should avoid in wisdom. So confined,
It is not in thy sphere to wake a thought,
More than compassion for thy helpless sex,
And aid my order binds to.
Alin. Have but patience,
Nor waste the few short moments fate allows me
To doubt my truth; the seal of death is on it.
You left the court on much supposed proof
Of her incontinence.
Pal. Supposed proof!
By Heaven! I saw her in the fulsome twine
Of riotous dalliance with one she swore,
That very noon, (a budding perjury)
Excited but her loathing.
Alin. At her window
I know you think you saw her.
Pal. Think I saw her!
Is there for visible objects better sense
Than sight to hold by?
Alin. Oh, most injured lady!
My sullied lips would but profane thy virtue
To say I know it spotless.
Pal. Do not mock me
With hopes impossible. I see her still—
Her snowy veil and sparkling coronet,
Peculiar in their form—
Alin. By me were worn,
While she and harmless thoughts slept sound together:
Bireno's was the fraud; my boundless love
Made me his instrument.

Pal. Oh hold my brain!—
But one thing more—How came he by that letter?
Her picture, mine?
Alin. These too I found, and gave him,
By her for you intended. 'Midst her notes
I found his title writ, and traced the address,
Stroke after stroke agreeing.
Pal. Wretch! fond wretch!
Have I for this with viperous calumny
Traduced her virgin fame? With desperate hand
Raised this sharp sword against my tortured breast?
But I will turn an usurer in revenge,
And take such bloody interest for my wrongs——
Alin. Let Heaven be my avenger—How I loved him!
Oh, savage! merciless! To snare my life,
From mere suspicion my unwary tongue
Might publish his contrivance—
Pal. How! thy life!
Inhuman dog! Were these his ruffians then
I found thee struggling with?
Alin. I thought they led me,
By his especial care, far from the city,
Where he ordain'd I should remain secure
To hide this swelling witness of my shame
My fatal passion bears him.
Pal. Heaven defend me!
Alin. There lies the bloody contract. Oh, forgive me!
I have struggled hard to make this last confession;
The icy grasp of death chills my shrunk heart.
Pal. Would I could save thee!
Alin. Say but you forgive me.
Pal. As I would be forgiven.
Alin. And will you plead
My pardon with my ever gracious mistress,
When she shall know?—'Tis dark—Let this atone.
[*Dies.*

Pal. Peace to thy hapless shade! Thou hast wash'd out
Thy offences in thy blood.—Unnatural slave!
Hell should invent new torments for thy crimes,
And howling fiends avoid thee. I have heard,
Have read, bold fables of enormity,
Devised to make men wonder, and confirm
The abhorrence of our nature, but this hardness
Transcends all fiction. Mover of the world!
Send not thy sulphurous lightning forth to strike,
Nor cleave the ground to gape and swallow him;
But, oh! reserve him for the sharper pangs
My vengeance meditates. Poor blasted flower!
Which way shall I bestow thee? It were cruel
To leave thee thus to insult.—Hold, yon peasant
May help to bear her hence. Shepherd, approach.

SCENE V.

Enter to PALADORE *a Shepherd.*

Hast thou a habitation near this place?

Shep. Fair sir, I have. There eastward turn your eyes;
The curling smoke above yon tufted trees
Mounts from my cottage fire.

Pal. Then call for aid,
And bear this body thither.

Shep. Mercy guard us!
This is a piteous sight. What could provoke
A youth of such a sweet and comely outside,
To act so sad a deed?

Pal. You wrong me, shepherd;
She fell by ruffians. Pr'ythee call thy hinds,
And for thy soul's sake do this courtesy.

Shep. Good sir, detain me not. I haste to the city,
Where all our villagers flock to behold
A most strange sight, and sad as it is strange;
With their best speed, my old limbs will be late;
The sun goes down apace.

Pal. Whate'er the sight,
Respite thy curiosity for gold.
Take this, and give a covering to that corse.
[*Gives a purse.*
I must away; you shall hear further from me. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Enter to the Shepherd, at an opposite entrance, RINALDO.

Shep. He had a hard heart, lady, struck thee down.
I would not for the herds that graze these hills,
Beyond my eyes, not, no, nor for the wealth
Of all who throng the city, I or mine
Should answer for a sin like this at doom's-day.
Oh, if thy father lives, what bitter tears
Will this misdeed wring from his watery eyes!
Thou shall not want what I can do for thee.
I'll make thy bed with leaves, and strew thee o'er
With herbs and flowers, wild thyme and lavender,
White lilies, and the prime of all our fields:
And for thy soul's peace, till thy knell is toll'd,
I'll number many an ave.—Come, for help.

Rin. Oh, cursed chance! Vain is my search to find him;
Yet all his life to come, from one lost moment
May take its mournful colour. Doom'd to die;
And he, alike accused, leave her to perish!
Most horrible!—Kind shepherd! answer quickly;
Saw'st thou a youth clad in a shining robe,
Of noble port, wandering these tangled woods?

Shep. Even such a one as you describe, but now,
(Him of your question doubtless) went from hence,
And left with me in charge—

Rin. No matter what.
Know you the path he took, which way his course?

Shep. I follow'd him a little with my eye,
And saw him wind round yonder shrubby hill,
Then pass the row of olives.

Rin. Leads it not
Strait to the city?

Shep. As the falcon flies.

Rin. Oh, Fortune! guide his steps once more to Pavia,
Else, never ending misery awaits him.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Hall.

Enter LUCIO *and Officer.*

Offi. Think on the danger.
Luc. Who sees only that,
Will ne'er surmount it. More than life I owe her.
Adversity's hard hand had crush'd my hopes,
Doom'd my sweet wife and infant family
To shameful beggary: my affliction reach'd her:
Can I forget her all-dispensing bounty,
That raised my soul from comfortless despair,
That bade my cheerful house again receive me,
Bless'd us with plenty?—If I fall, and save her,
'Tis well; I ask no nobler epitaph.
Offi. There's virture in your motive and your purpose;
But how effect her rescue?
Luc. Will you join us?
Offi. Or why these questions?
Luc. I dare trust your honour,
The bond of soldiers. Know then, I command
(And sought it with this hope) her prison guard:
I have sounded them, they hate the cruel service.
A little, ere the fatal hour's approach,
We mean to pass their unresisting force,

Throw wide the iron gates, and bear her safe
Beyond the danger of this bloody edict.
Offi. It looks success, may fortune second it!
The throngs assembled to behold the sight,
Will count for idle gazers, and conceal
Your bold design, till 'tis too late to thwart it.
How brooks she her sad plight?
Luc. With fortitude.
So sweet, so even-temper'd, that her death
Seems but a phantom, dress'd by Fancy's trick,
To frighten children. All her soul's employ'd
In minist'ring, with softest piety,
To her distracted father.
Offi. There's a spectacle,
Indeed, heart-rending. Cast on the cold ground,
He strews his head with ashes, by the roots
Tears out his silver hair, beats his poor breast;
While the significant dumbness of his gesture
Beggars all power of words.
Luc. Thou blind mischance,
Stand neuter! we shall cheer him presently.
I'll to my station. Keep thy sword conceal'd,
Nor sheath it drawn, but in the villain's breast,
That dare oppose us. Be but firm, and fear not.
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

BIRENO, *alone.*

By their description, it was Paladore;
The place, the glittering robe, his courage too,
In so assailing them. If their keen daggers
Left her enough of breath to tell the tale,

She has, no doubt, told all, and wing'd him back,
To wreak his vengeance on me; this way only
Can I be safe; firm as he is, and fearless,
My ambush cuts him off; and, by his death,
The full tide of my prosperous fortune flows,
Never to ebb.

SCENE III.

Enter to BIRENO, ASCANIO.

Well, the great period comes;
No champion meets my challenge?
Asc. No, not one.
Fear puts the livery of conscience on:
They cannot think one of your nobleness
Would charge a lady falsely to the death;
And few are the examples of success
Against conviction: true, 'tis pitiful,
That one so fair, so young, of royal birth,
For the mere frailty of impulsive nature,
Should meet so sad a doom; the law's to blame,
That bloodily enrols a venial trespass,
With those o'ergrown and huge enormities,
That shake society; but they can no more
Than drop a tear or two, and let her die.
Bir. True; she must die; and the heart-wounded king,
Whose age already totters o'er the grave,
Like a crush'd serpent, but a little longer
Will drag his painful being. Yet one fear
Sits, like a boding raven o'er my breast,
And flaps its heavy wing to damp my joy.

Asc. What fear can reach you now? From Paladore?

Bir. Perdition seize him! yes. But, my good ruffians,
Ere this, I trust, have sent to his account,
That ill-starr'd Briton. Doubly arm'd they wait him—
Close by a brambled cavern he must pass,
Returning hither. Yet, should he escape——
It cannot be—Heart, re-assume thy seat!
But, come, the time draws on—Bear to the lists,
My martial ensigns; I must seem prepared
To oppose a danger that will never meet me.

[*As he is going, a servant delivers a paper.*

The hand of Bernardine, my trusty spy. [*Reads.*
Confusion! rescue her! Come back, Ascanio!
Fly to St Mark's, collect the cohort there;
Go, place them instantly around the prison;
Bid them disarm the guard that holds that place,
And, on their lives, drive back the populace.
I'll to Honorias—These stout veterans
Will sweep the rabble like vile chaff before them.
Away—A moment may be fatal to us.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

A Prison.

Enter Princess, Women attending.

Prin. Nay, dry these tears—The awful eve of death
Is but profaned by shews of common sorrow.
I have a triple armour round my heart,
'Gainst all the shapes of terror; yet it owns
The soft contagion of affection's drops,

And melts at kindness. Come, this must not be—
You, Laura! must be near me at the block,
And help to disarray me.—What, more tears?
Stop them, for shame; I must have strangers else,
For this last office. When the axe has fallen,
They have no further power.—Save from disgrace
My poor remains, and on your loves, I charge you,
When I am dead, see that they touch me not.
I have not been unmindful of your service.
It is not much.—There were too many poor,
Too many comfortless, to leave me rich:
But you will find a father in the king,
And, for my sake, he will be bounteous to you.
Retire, and weep, I dare not look upon you.
[*Takes a picture from her breast.*
Thou dear dumb image of a form beloved!
Soul of my soul, and precious even in death,
A while be sensible! Receive this sigh,
And take my last farewell. When thou shalt know
My truth and sufferings, let not the sad tale
Blast the fair promise of thy noble youth,
But, with a sweet, a sacred melancholy,
Embalm the soft remembrance of my love.
My father! Oh, angelic host support me,
To bear this parting, and death's pang is past!

SCENE V.

Princess, King.

I am indeed subdued—To see thee thus!
King. They would not let me die—
Prin. These few short hours,
Alas, how have they changed thee! Murderous sorrow!

Thy furrows sink more deep than age or time.
Your cheek is ashy pale, your eyes quite sunk.
Will you not look upon me?

King. Oh, no, no;
I came to give thee comfort, to sustain thee;
But, looking on thee, I shall weep again,
And add my load of misery to thine.
Yet teach me to be patient.

Prin. View me well;
Nor think these tears fall for my own distress;
The throbbings of my heart are for my father.
'Tis apprehension makes death terrible;
Cowards, from weakness tremble; guilt, from conscience;
But the firm bosom innocence invests,
Knows it a fix'd inevitable end,
Meets the pale guest, nor startles at the encounter.

King. Thou wert my all, a mote that vex'd thy eye,
A thorn that razed thy finger, snatch'd my thoughts
From every care but thee. And thus to lose thee!

Prin. Oh, were our being circumscribed by earth,
This end indeed might shake my constancy:
But, faith apart, think what bright evidence
Shines here within of immortality.
Who has not felt the heavenly overflow
Of thought congenial to the eternal mind?
Why are there tears of virtuous sympathy?
Whence that celestial fluid of the eye,
That sheds such full, such satisfied delight,
But that the God of all benevolence,
Thus gives a glimpse of blessedness to come,
In joys refined from sense, and far transcending?

King. What has old age to lose? Is the poor remnant
Of life worn thread-bare precious for itself?
Can we be fond of pain, and feebleness?
No; but our second spring, our souls renew'd

In our dear children, there we cling to life;
Mortality! thy last, thy heaviest curse,
Bids us remain the mournful monument,
The living tomb of all our comforts buried,
Telling no more in our sepulchral sorrow,
Than that they were, and are not.

Prin. You must live
(For sure the hour will come) to see this cloud
Pass from my memory; and the shame he merits,
Fall on my base accuser.

King. (*Kneeling.*) Hear me, Heaven!
On the devoted murderer of my child,
With tenfold visitation pour my sorrow!
Let fear, mistrust, and horror ever haunt him!
Slumber forsake his couch, and joy his table!
If he must reign, Oh, line his crown with thorns!
Turn reverence to contempt, the friend he trusts,
Meet him for smiles with daggers: war abroad,
Treason at home, pursue, and harass him!
And may the steam, that mounts from innocent blood,
Make heavier the dire thunderbolt,
Lanced from thy red right arm, at last to crush him!

Prin. Spirit of peace! on his distemper'd rage,
Oh, shed thy healing balm! [*A noise without.*
What mean these shouts?
This wild tumultuous noise?

Enter to them an Attendant.

Atten. Our prayers are heard:
The guard gives way, the massy bars are forced;
And, like delivering angels, the roused people,
Burst in to lead you from this den of horror.

King. Oh, joy unhoped! Millions of blessings
crown them!

Atten. Led by the gallant Lucio, they advance.

King. The tiger then may seek his prey in vain;
My brave, my generous people!—Hark! they come.
[*More noise.*

Prin. Ah, sir! retire—Your heart must thank
their purpose;
Yet sure 'twere most unmeet for royalty,
Whose sway, and throne, are hallow'd in obedience,
To countenance this outrage. Pray, retire.
King. Yes, I will go; but, oh, be swift, my child!
Nor dally with this blessed chance to save thee.
[*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Enter to her LUCIO, *his sword drawn.*

Prin. (*Advancing.*) Your purpose quickly?
Luc. (*Kneeling.*) Your deliverance, lady!
I owe a debt of boundless gratitude,
And thus in part would pay it. Madam, fly!
The people all are yours; a chosen band,
Faithful, and brave, wait to conduct you hence:
This smiling moment seiz'd, may place you safe,
Beyond the dreadful fate that threatens you.
Prin. But not beyond the reach of foul disgrace,
The noble mind's worst fate—I know thee, Lucio!
And thank thy kind intention. Could my flight
Restore my name to its original whiteness,
Make palpable his lie who slanders me,
I'd think thee thus commission'd from above,
And welcome life with transport.
Luc. Do I wake!
When your good angel thus by me invites you,
Is this a time to doubt? Can you devote
That rosy youth, that all-commanding beauty,
To voluntary death?
Prin. Were it a pain,

Worse than the fear of cowards can conceive,
I would abide it. Have I not endured
A greater horror, heard myself proclaim'd
The thing I scorn to utter? Shall I live,
To bear about a disputable fame,
Scattering the eternal seeds of strife and war
Over my country, for the privilege
To draw a little transitory breath,
And be consign'd to infamy, or honor,
But as the sword of conquest arbitrates?

Luc. These are suggestions of your generous anger,
And not your reason—Oh, most honour'd lady!
Again behold me prostrate at your feet:
Thus, thus, by me the people supplicate. [*Kneels.*
We have but one short moment left to save you;
Seize it, and live, live to be still revered
Your country's pride, her boast, her ornament.

Prin. I am not to be changed. But, Oh, my father!
The good old king, he wants a friend like thee.

Asc. (*Without.*) Force down the bridge. Kill all who dare oppose.
They fly; stand fast——

Prin. He cuts my purpose short.

SCENE VII.

Enter ASCANIO, *with Soldiers, to them.*

Luc. Oh, death to all our hopes! 'tis now too late.
I cast thee from my hand, vile instrument!
Since she disdains thy service.
[*Throws down his sword.*

Asc. Seize that traitor—
Quick, bear him hence—Madam, I grieve to speak it,
The herald to the temple porch has issued
For final proclamation.

Prin. Spare your sorrow—
A shameful world, disgraced by souls like thine,
Turns grief to joy, when noble natures leave it.

[*Exit Princess guarded.*

SCENE VIII.

Enter to ASCANIO, BIRENO.

Bir. Oh, let me clasp thee! This was worthy service.
But for thy zeal, the high-raised edifice
So near complete, had tumbled to the earth,
And crush'd me in its fall.

Asc. Haste to the lists;
A moment more consummates our design,
And Fate itself may strive in vain to shake us.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

The Lists in the middle of the stage. A scaffold, guard, and executioner at the bottom. Many spectators, officers, and senators, preceding the Princess, supported by women. BIRENO *with* ASCANIO, *who bears his shield and sword. Heralds with trumpets on the sides.*

Offi. Make room. Fall back. Let the procession pass.

Bir. 'Tis known why I stand here; yet once again,
And for the last time, herald, sound my challenge.
Proceed, none answer. [BIRENO's *Trumpet sounds.*

Prin. I would have it so.
You generous people, who behold with horror
These gloomy preparations, do not deem me
Cold and unthankful for my offer'd safety,
Though I preferr'd this dire alternative.
Before the tongue of slander struck my fame,
The rude hand of affliction never touch'd me;
Life had a thousand bonds to tie me to it,
Young spirits, royal birth, fortune and greatness:
But honour was the prop, round which, like stalks
Tender and weak, these accessaries twined.
When calumny's sharp edge cut down that trunk,
Then these poor tendrils lost their hue and wither'd.
With that great ruin fell my happiness.
I now stand on eternity's dark verge,
Nor dare I to the God and Judge of Truth,
Bring lips with falsehood sullied. Of the offence
Cast on me by vile malice, I am free,
Even to abhorrence; this to Heaven is known,
My own heart, and my accuser: therefore boldly,
And for your sakes, will I arraign the law,
Which thus has pass'd upon me.

1*st Sen.* Gracious lady!
If in this censure we too stand accused,
Think we pronounced, but did not make the law.
And let my bleeding heart bear witness for me,
I would lay down the dearest thing I own,
To save you from the forfeit.

Prin. Good, my lord!
All forms of justice have been well observed;
My blame lights on the law, not on your office,
Which you with truth and mercy minister.

But let these mute spectators mark my counsel:
Fall at the king's feet, clasp the senate's knees,
And pray them, they wipe out clear from their rolls,
This more than cruel edict; else, be sure
From every roof there hangs a dangerous sword,
(Hangs by a thread) which each dark hand may drop
To pierce and sever nature's dearest ties.
She who profanes her honour's sanctity,
Upbraided by her heart, by her own sex
Shun'd or neglected, nay, held cheap and vile,
Even to the loathing of the lover's sense,
Who wrought her easy nature to transgress;
These are sharp penalties: but added death
Turns the clear stream of justice into blood,
And makes such law more cursed than anarchy.
Forget not my example; let me perish:
But if you pluck your safety from my ruin,
I shall not die in vain. Farewell—Lead on—

[*Prin. goes toward the Scaffold, a trumpet sounds.*

1*st Sen.* Hold, on your lives!

Bir. What means that trumpet's voice?
It sounds a shrill alarm,

SCENE X.

Enter to them a Squire.

Squ. Arrest your sentence.
I come in the name of one who hears with horror
This barbarous process, to proclaim the accuser
Of that most innocent and royal lady,
A slanderer and villain; who accepts

Her just defence, and by the law of arms
Throws down this gage, and claims the combat for her.

Bir. Take it, Ascanio. Bid your knight appear,
(If such his order) for to none beneath
Am I thus bound to answer. Speak his titles.

Squ. He wills not I reveal him; but suffice it,
He has a name in arms that will not shame
The noble cause he fights for.

Bir. Bid him enter.
My shield and sword. Say, I am deck'd to meet him. [*Exit Squire.*
Some rash adventurer, prodigal of life,
Bribed by her father's gold to grace her fall,
And add an easy trophy to my banners.——
Confusion! Paladore!

SCENE XI.

Enter to them PALADORE.

Prin. 'Tis he, 'tis he!—
Then, life, thou art welcome.—
[*A loud Murmur among the People.*

Bir. Marshal, do your office!
Furies and hell!—Keep order in the lists!—
Silence that uproar——

Pal. Yes, behold me, villain!
I have thee in the toils; thou can'st not 'scape me.—
But, Oh! most wrong'd and heavenly excellence!
[*To the Princess.*
How shall I plead for pardon?—Can the abuse
Of his deep craft, and devilish artifice,
Fooling my nature's plainness, blanch my cheek

From the deep shame that my too easy faith
Combined with hell against thee?
Prin. Rise, my soldier!
Though yet I know not by what subtle practice
Thy nobleness was wrought on, nor the means
That since reveal'd his fraud, praise be to Heaven!
Thy presence plucks my honour from the grave;
Thou livest, thou knowest my truth, thou wilt avenge me.
Pal. Avenge thee!—Yes—Did his right hand grasp thunder,
Did yelling furies combat on his side,
(Paled in with circling fires) I would assail him,
Nor cast a look to Fortune for the event.
Bir. Presumptuous Briton! Think not that bold mien,
A wanton's favour, or thy threats, have power
To shrink the sinews of a soldier's arm.
Pal. A soldier's arm! Thou double murderer!
Assassin in thy intention, and in act.
But ere my falchion cleave thy treacherous breast,
I will divulge thee.—Bring that ruffian forth.—
[*One of* ALINDA'S *murderers is brought out.*
Two hell-hounds, such as this, he set upon me;
One fell beneath my sword; that wretch I spared,
Kneeling for mercy: let your justice doom him.
Look you amazed! Peruse that paper, lords,
His compact for the blood of a fair minion,
He taught to sin, and made her wages death —
Ha! Does it shake thee? See Alinda's form,
Thy panting image mangled in her side,
Stalks from her sanguine bed, and ghastly smiles,
To aid the prowess of this dauntless soldier.
Bir. (*Aside.*) Destruction! All's reveal'd!—
Asc. (*To* BIR.) What, turn'd to stone!
Droop not, for shame.—Be quick, retort the charge.
Bir. All false as hell! And thou—Defend thyself;

Nor blast me thus with thy detested presence.——
This to thy heart. [*Fight.* BIR. *falls.*
Pal. Oh, impotence of guilt!
An infant's lath had fell'd him. Villain, die!
And know thy shame, and the deep wound that writhes thee,
Are but a feeble earnest of the pangs
Reserved beneath for giant crimes like thine.
Prin. Haste to the king, proclaim this bless'd event!
Bir. Perfidious chance! Caught in my own device!—
Accursed!—Ha! they drag me, tear me!—Oh!—
[*Dies.*
Prin. I have a thousand things to ask, to hear:
But, Oh! the joy to see thee thus again,
To owe my life, my honour, to thy love—
These tears, these rapturous tears, let them speak for me.
Pal. I could endure the malice of my fate:
But this full tide of such excessive bliss,
Sure 'tis illusion all! It quite transports me.
When I have borne thee from this scene of horror,
Perhaps I may grow calm, and talk with reason.

SCENE XII.

Enter to them, King, LUCIO, *&c.*

King. Where is she? Let me strain her to my heart.—
They cannot part us now, my joy! my comfort!——
Thou generous youth! How can my o'erflowing soul

Find words to thank thee?—Words! Poor recompense!
Here I invest thee with the forfeit lands,
The wealth and honours of that prostrate traitor.
This too is little—then receive her hand,
Due to thy love, thy courage, and thy virtue,
And joys unutterable crown your union.

[*Exeunt.*

BRAGANZA;

A

TRAGEDY:

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

BY

ROBERT JEPHSON, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON JUAN, Duke of Braganza,	*Mr Reddish.*
ALMADA	*Mr Aickin.*
RIBIRO,	*Mr Palmer.*
MENDOZA,	*Mr Brereton.*
ANTONIO,	*Mr Wrighten.*
MELLO,	*Mr Wheeler.*
FERDINAND,	*Mr Norris.*
LEMOS,	*Mr Usher.*
COREA,	*Mr Hurst.*
VELASQUEZ, Minister of Spain,	*Mr Smith.*
PIZARRO,	*Mr Davies.*
RAMIREZ,	*Mr Packer.*
Officer,	*Mr Keen.*
First Citizen,	*Mr Wright.*
Second Citizen,	*Mr Griffiths.*
LOUISA, Duchess of Braganza,	*Mrs Yates.*
INES,	*Mrs Johnston.*

Gentlemen, Attendants, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE,—Lisbon.

BRAGANZA.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Piazza.

RIBIRO *meeting a Spanish Officer conducting two Citizens bound.* LEMOS *and* COREA *following* RIBIRO *at a little distance.*

Rib. Hold, officer—What means this spectacle?
Why lead you thus in fetters through the streets
These aged citizens?
Offi. Behold this order. [*Shews a paper.*
Rib. I know the character. 'Tis signed Velasquez.
1*st Cit.* We have not mines of unexhausted gold
To feed rapacious Spain and stern Velasquez:
And wrung by hard exactions for the state—
Offi. No more—I must not suffer—

Rib. (*Pointing to the prisoners.*) Pr'ythee, sir,
See these white hairs, these shackles—Misery
May sure complain—You are a soldier, sir,
Your mien bespeaks a brave one—
Offi. I will walk by.
Detain them not too long—'Tis a harsh sentence.
[*Officer withdraws a little.*
2d Cit. O good Ribiro, what have we deserved,
That these rude chains shou'd gall us?
Rib. What deserved!
1st Cit. The little all our industry had earn'd,
To smooth the bed of sickness, nurse old age,
And give a decent grave to our cold ashes,
Spain's hungry minions have already seized.—
Rib. I know the rest—Dry up these scalding tears—
The hour of your deliv'rance is at hand:—
An arm more strong than shuts your prison doors,
Shall burst them soon, and give you ample vengeance.
Cit. May we indeed expect—
Rib. Most sure—But hush—
Resume the semblance of this transient shame,
And hide your hope in sadness—Brave Castilian,
Thanks for this courtesy.
[*To the Officer, who returns.*
Cit. Lead on—Farewell.
[*Exeunt Guard and Citizens.*

LEMOS *and* COREA *come forward to* RIBIRO.

Rib. Was that a sight for Lisbon?
Lem. O shame! shame!
What crime cou'd they commit?—Old, helpless, plunder'd—
Rib. Even thoughts are crimes in this distemper'd state.

They once had wealth as you have—Spain thought meet
To seize it—They (rash men) have dared to murmur.
Velasquez here—our scourge—King Philip's idol,
Whom Portugal must bow to—mildly dooms them,
But to perpetual bondage for this treason.
Lem. We must be patient—'Tis a cureless evil.
Rib. Is patience then the only virtue left us?
Come, come, there is a remedy more manly.
Cor. Wou'd it were in our reach!
Rib. Look here, I grasp it.
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*
What, turned to statues!—Hence enfranchisement,
If the quick fire that lately warm'd your breasts,
Already wastes to embers.—Am I rash?
We touch'd this theme before—You felt it then.
Wou'd I cou'd put a tongue in every ingot,
That now lies piled within your massy stores—
Your gold perhaps might move you—Spain will seize it,
Then bid you mourn the loss in the next dungeon,
Or dig her mines for more—Is't not enough?—
Instruct me, Lemos, you, good Corea, teach me
This meekness so convenient to our foes,
Or pierce this swelling bosom.
Lem. Who can teach it?
'Tis not in art, Ribiro—Know us better.
The canker discontent consumes within,
And mocks our smooth exterior.
Cor. Hear me for both;
For all th' indignant hearts in Portugal—
If curses sped like plagues and pestilence,
Thus wou'd I strike them at the towers of Spain.
May her swoln pride burst like an empty bubble!
Distraction rend her councils, route and shame
Pursue her flying squadrons—Tempests scatter
And whirlpools swallow up her full-mann'd navies!
Bold insurrection spread through all her states,

Shaking like pent-up winds their loose allegiance!
All Europe arm, and every frowning king
Point at one foe, and let that foe be Spain!
Rib. O be that curse prophetic!—Here 'tis dangerous,
Nor will the time allow to tell you all.
But thus far rest assured;—I speak not rashly—
A project is on foot, and now just rip'ning,
Will give our indignation nobler scope
Than tears or curses (priests' and women's weapons.)
All that secures the event of great designs,
Sage heads, firm hearts, and executing arms,
In formidable union league with us,
And chain capricious fortune to our standard.
Lem. Say, can our aid promote this glorious cause?
Rib. All private virtue is the public fund:
As that abounds, the state decays, or thrives;
Each shou'd contribute to the general stock,
And who lends most, is most his country's friend.
Lem. O wou'd Braganza meet the people's wish!
Rib. He is not yet resolved,—but may be won—
Cou'd I assure him men like you but wish'd it,
(For well he knows and loves you)—Trust me, Lemos!
It wou'd do more to knit him to this cause,
Than legions of our hot nobility.
Cor. We love his virtue—will support his rights—
Rib. Then shew it by your deeds.—Your artizans
Are prompt, bold, hardy, fond of violence.
Alarm their slumb'ring courage, rouse their rage,
Wake their dull'd senses to the shame and scorn
That hisses in the ears of willing bondmen;
If they will hazard one bold stroke for freedom,
A leader shall be found, a brave—a just one.
Anon expect me where the ivied arch
Rears the bold image of our late Braganza.
In sullen discontent he seems to frown
As if still hostile to the foes of Lisbon.

There we'll discourse at large—Almada comes—
Lem. Is he a friend?
Rib. A firm one—No dishonour
E'er bow'd that rev'rend head—That mighty spirit,
When first the oppressor, like a flood, o'erwhelm'd us,
Rear'd high his country's standard and defied him.
He comes to seek me—Lose no time—Remember.
[*Exeunt* LEM. *and* COR.

RIBIRO *alone.*

I shou'd detest my zeal, cou'd it be stir'd
Against the wholesome rigour of restraint
Licentiousness made needful—But, good Heaven!
Foul murders unprovoked, deliberate cruelty—
The god within us must rise up against it.

Enter ALMADA.

Alm. Well met, Ribiro—What new proselytes?
Thy ardour every hour, or finds, or makes them.
Rib. No—thank the Spaniard for our proselytes—
Scarce half an hour ago, two citizens
(My blood still boils) by fell Velasquez' order
Were dragg'd to prison—
Alm. Spare my soul, Ribiro,
Superfluous detestation of that villain.
Rib. Knowing this way they were to pass, I brought
Lemos and Corea (whom last night I sounded)
That their own eyes might see the outrages,
Men of their order must expect to meet
From power that knows no bounds and owns no law.
Alm. 'Twas wisely done; for minds of coarse alloy
But bluntly feel the touch of others wrongs,
Though deep they take the impression of their own.
Rib. By heav'n their fury bore a nobler stamp;

Their honest rage glow'd on their kindling cheeks,
Broke through the cold restraints of coward caution,
And swell'd even to an eloquence of anger.
Alm. 'Tis well—But are they yet inform'd how near
Th' approaching hour, decisive of our fate,
That gives us death or freedom—that the dawn—
Rib. Not yet—They still believe the duke at noon
But visits Lisbon to command the march
Of our new levies, to the Spanish bounds;
Himself to follow streight—Ere then I mean
Again to see them, and still more to whet
The keenness of their hate against our tyrants.
At least a thousand follow where they lead—
Alm. Their boldness well directed may do much.
Rib. That care be mine—I've studied—and I know them;
Inconstant, sanguine, easily inflamed,
But like the nitrous powder uncompress'd,
Consuming by the blaze nought but itself.
'Tis ours to charge the mine with deadly skill,
And bury usurpation in the ruin.
Alm. I think we cannot fail—Our friends are firm.
Honour will bind the noble—hope the weak,
And common interest all—The insulting Spaniard
Broods over embryo mischiefs, nor suspects
The wretched worm conceals a mortal sting
To pierce the haughty heel that tramples him.
Rib. How great will be our triumph, Spain's disgrace,
When ev'ry mischief that perfidious court
Has framed against Braganza's precious life,
Recoils on the contriver!
Alm. Urge that home;
Urge how the duke's affection to his country,
His right unquestionable to her crown,
First mark'd him for the victim of false Spain;

That his commission as great admiral,
His general's staff, and all the lofty pomp
Of his high-sounding titles, were but meant
As gilded snares to invite him to his death.

Rib. These truths, shameful to Philip, must be told;
They will endear Don Juan to the people,
Will keep them waking, restless, and disposed
To aid the glorious tumult of to-morrow.

Alm. My heart expands, and with a prophet's fire
Seizes the bright reversion of our hopes.
I see the genius of our realm restored,
And smiling lead him to his rightful throne.
No wild ambition, like a pamper'd steed,
O'erleaps the boundaries of law and reason,
And tramples every seed of social virtue:
But o'er the temp'rate current of his blood
The gentlest passions brush their breezy wings,
To animate, but not disturb the stream.
Such is his temper—The approaching hour
Demands perhaps a sterner.

Rib. Heaven, still kind,
Has in his consort's breast struck deep the root
Of each aspiring virtue.—Bright Louisa,
To all the softness of her tender sex,
Unites the noblest qualities of man;
A genius to embrace the amplest scheme
That ever swell'd the labouring statesman's breast;
Judgment most sound, persuasive eloquence,
To charm the froward and convince the wise;
Pure piety without religion's dross,
And fortitude that shrinks at no disaster.

Alm. She is indeed a wonder.—O Ribiro,
That woman was the spring that moved us all.
She canvass'd all our strength, urged all our wrongs,
Combined our force, and methodized our vengeance;
Taught us that ends which seem impossible

Are lost, or compass'd only by the means;
That fortune is a false divinity,
But folly worships what the wise man makes.
She turn'd our cold dejection to device,
And rous'd despondency to active valour.
My age delights to dwell on her perfections.—
Rib. And I could ever hear them—Virtue's praise
To honest ears is music.—But no more—
A noise comes this way, and that hurrying throng
Proclaims the upstart minister's approach.
This is the hour with saucy pageantry
Thro' our thin'd streets he takes his wonted round;
Like the dire clapping of the harpy's wing,
To choak the frugal meal with bitter tears,
And scare content from every humble board.
I will avoid him. But I go, proud man,
When next we meet to make my presence dreadful!
[*Exit* RIBIRO.

ALMADA *alone.*

Honest Ribiro!—To this hour my soul
Has kept her purpose; my firm foot has ne'er
Swerv'd from its path in Lisbon, nor shall now
Give way to insolence.—Your country's dregs!
(*Looking towards the train of* VEL.
Ye supple sycophants! Ay, cringe and beg
That he will tread upon your prostrate necks,
Or ride you like his mules.—Authority!
Thy worship'd symbols round a villain's trunk
Provoke men's mockery, not their reverence.

Officer entering.

Make way there—room, room for the minister.
Know you the lord Velasquez comes this way?
(*To* ALMADA.

Pray, sir, give place.

Alm. Officious varlet, off!
Let not thy servile touch pollute my robe.
Can hirelings frown?—

Enter VELASQUEZ *and* PIZARRO.—*The Magistrates of Lisbon with their Insignia, Guards and Attendants preceding.*

Vel. (*Looking sternly at* ALM.) How! Am I then despised—
A tumult in my presence?—Good, my lord,
It better wou'd become your gravity,
To set the fair example of obedience
To trust and office, than instruct the rabble
In what they are the most prone to, feuds and faction.

Alm. Most reverend admonition! Hold my spleen!
Ye golden coronets and ermin'd robes,
Bend from your stools, behold this wond'rous man,
This Lusitanian censor, this sage Cato,
This consul, with his lictors, rods, and axes,
Reprove the boy, Almada, for his lightness!

Piz. Regard not his wild words, he's old and choleric.

Vel. I must dissemble—His ungovern'd spirit
Will blaze more fierce if I oppose its fury. (*Aside.*
Attend me at the citadel—(*To his train.*) Move on.
I know not whether to accuse my fortune,
(*Exeunt Attendants*
Or blame my own demerits, brave Almada,
That ever when we meet, thy angry brow
Rebukes me with its frown, or keen reproach
Darts from thy tongue, and checks the forward wish
That fain wou'd court thy esteem, and call thee friend!

Alm. Friendship with thee!—Is it so slight a boon?
If such deserve the name, go seek for friends
Amidst the desp'rate crew whose only bond
Is the black conscience of confederate crimes;
Nor in prepost'rous union think to join
Integrity with guilt, and shame with honour.
Know me for what I am—thy foe profess'd:
Fall on thy knee—solicit Heaven for mercy,
And tell that seat of pride, thy obdurate heart,
Its last, its only virtue is—remorse.—

(*Exit* ALMADA.

Manent VELASQUEZ *and* PIZARRO.

Vel. Go, hoary fool! preach to the whistling winds,
I scorn thy council, and defy thy hate.
'Tis time enough for lagging penitence,
When age, like thine, has quench'd ambition's flame.
Now nobler thoughts possess my active soul.
This haughty province first shall feel my weight,
And since it scorns my love, through fear obey me.

Piz. Already all the power of Spain is thine,
The Vice Queen, Marg'ret, tho' of Austrian blood,
Discreet, firm, virtuous, complains in vain;
You leave her but a regent's empty title,
While power is only yours:—And happier still,
Braganza summon'd to attend the king,
Will soon cut off his country's only hope,
And leave no rival to obscure thy lustre.
'Bate but the shew and name of royalty,
Thou art already king.

Vel. The shew, the name,
All that gives grace and awe to majesty,
Shall soon be mine, Pizarro—Olivarez,
Whose counsels rule the Escurial, to my hand

Has long resign'd the reins of Portugal,
And dreams not (unsuspicious of my faith)
The delegate, the creature of his breath,
Anon will bid defiance to his power,
And rank himself with monarchs.
Piz. O, take heed,
Consider, sir, that power still awes the world—
Vel. My towering fortune rises on a rock,
And firm as Atlas will defy the storm.
The purple cement of a prince's blood
Shall strengthen its foundation.
Piz. Ha!
Vel. Braganza's.
The precious mischief swells my exulting breast,
And soon shall burst its prison.
Piz. Can it be?
I know thy dauntless temper mocks at fear,
And prudence guides thy daring.—But a prince
Follow'd by faithful guards—encompass'd round
With troops of gallant friends—the people's idol—
Vel. Is mortal, like the meanest of his train,
And dies before to-morrow.—Cease to wonder—
But when this mighty ruin shakes the realm,
Prepare like me, with well-dissembled grief,
To hide our real joy, and blind suspicion.
(*Flourish of trumpets.*
These trumpets speak his entrance; never more
Such sprightly notes, nor shout of joyful friends,
Pæan or choral song shall usher him;
But sad solemnity of funeral pomp,
Mute sorrow, mournful dirges, ghastly rites,
Marshal'd by death, in comfortless array,
Wait his cold relics to their sepulchre.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

An Antichamber in the Duke of BRAGANZA'S *Palace.*

Enter RIBIRO *and* MENDOZA.

Rib. A moment's pause, Mendoza! here appointed
By promise to the duke at noon to wait him,
I could not mingle with his followers,
So saw it but in part—
Men. The air still rings
With loudest acclamations.
Rib. Yes, Mendoza;
With joy I heard them—heard the vaulted sky
Echo Braganza.—'Twas no hireling noise,
No faction's roar of mercenary joy,
Sound without transport—but the heart-felt cry
Of a whole nation's welcome. Hear it, Spain!
Proud Usurpation, hear it!
Men. The whole way
Was cover'd thick with panting multitudes,
That scarce left passage for their chariot wheels;
The trees were bent with people; ev'ry roof,
Dome, temple, portico, so closely fill'd,
The gazers made the wonder. Here and there
A discontented Spaniard stalk'd along

Should'ring the crowd; and with indignant scorn
Turn'd up his sallow cheek in mockery.
Rib. We shall retort their scorn—Mark'd you the duke?
His mind is ever letter'd in his face.
Men. Pleasure was mingled with anxiety,
Both visible at once. But, O what words
Can paint the angel-form that graced his side,
His bright Louisa! like th' Olympian queen,
When o'er her fragrant bosom Venus bound
Th' enchanting cestus—from her lucid eyes
Stream'd the pure beams of soft benevolence,
And glories more than mortal shone around her.
Harmonious sounds of dulcet instruments
Swell'd by the breath, or swept from tuneful wire,
Floated in air—while yellow Tagus burn'd
With prows of flaming gold, their painted flags
In gaudy frolic fluttering to the breeze.
On to their palace thus the triumph came:
Alighted at the gate, the princely pair
Express'd their thanks in silent dignity
Of gesture, far more eloquent than words;
Then turn'd them from the throng—
Rib. Why this looks well.
The duke will sure be rous'd to resolution
By this bright presage of his coming glory.
Men. With grief I learn he still is undetermined.
His fears prevail against the public wish;
And thus the ill-poised scale of our fair hopes,
Mounts light and unsubstantial.
Rib. O you wrong him.
I know his noble nature—Juan's heart
Pants not with selfish fear—His wife, his friends,
An infant family, a kingdom's fate,
More than his own, besiege his struggling soul;
He must be more than man, who will not hear
Such powerful calls, and less, who can despise them.
Men. Indeed I cannot wonder he's disturb'd,

But doubts are treason in a cause like this.
Rib. Dismiss these fears—Louisa's gentle sway
Will fix him to our purpose. Night's chaste orb
Rules not the heavings of the restless tide
More sure, than she with mild ascendancy
Can govern all his ebbs and flows of passion.
But come, by this time the fond multitude
Have gaz'd away their longing, and retire.
Our greeting will be seasonable now. (*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A magnificent Chamber in the Duke of Braganza's Palace.—The Duke speaking to LEMOS *and* COREA; *other Citizens at a little distance.*

Duke. No more, kind countrymen—This goodness melts me.
What can I render back for all these honours?
This wond'rous prodigality of praise?
What but my life, whene'er your welfare asks it.
Lem. Heav'n guard that precious life for Portugal!
To you, as to a tutelary god,
This sinking country lifts her suppliant hands,
And certain of your strength, implores your arm
To raise her prostrate genius from the dust.
Duke. A private man, a subject like yourselves,
Bankrupt of power, though rich in gratitude—
The sense of what you suffer wrings my soul,
Nor makes your sorrows less.
Duch. Much injured men,
Whom love, not fear, should govern—from this hour
Know we espouse your cause—We have not hearts
Of aliens, to behold with passing glance

And cold indifference, the ruthless spoiler
Smile o'er the ravage of your fertile plains.
We feel the fetters that disgrace your limbs;
We mourn the vigour of your minds depress'd:
With horror we behold your gen'rous blood,
Drain'd by the insatiate thirst of ravening wolves.
If we have nature, we must feel your wrongs,
If we have power, redress them.

Cor. Matchless lady!
There spoke our rightful queen, our better angel!
In us behold your servants, subjects, soldiers;
Though yet unpractis'd in the trade of war,
Our swords will find an edge at your command.

Duke. We neither doubt your courage nor your love,
And both perhaps ere long may meet the trial—
I would detain you—but our conference
Might now be dangerous—Rank me with your friends,
And know I have a heart for Portugal.

[*Exeunt* LEMOS, COREA, *&c.*

Manent Duke and Duchess.

Duch. Why wears my Juan's brow that thoughtful cloud?
Why thus with downcast look and folded arms,
When ev'ry other bosom swells with hope,
When expectation, like a fiery steed,
Anticipates the course, and pants to hear
The sprightly signal start him for the goal?
Think that the people from their leader's eye
Catch the sure omens of their future fate:
With his their courage falls, their spirits rise;
For confidence is conquest's harbinger.

Duke. Light of thy Juan's life! My soul's best joy!

Swifter than meteors glide, or wings of wind,
My nimble thoughts shoot through their whirling round:
A thousand cares distract this anxious breast.
To recompense the dark uncertainty
Of this dread interval, 'twixt now and morn,
Would ask whole years of happiness to come.
Now thou art mine, these faithful arms enfold thee;
But, oh! to-morrow may behold thee torn
By barbarous ruffians from their fond embrace;
The flowing honours of that beauteous head
May sweep a scaffold's dust, and iron death
Close in eternal sleep those radiant eyes
That beam with love and joy unutterable.

Duch. O make me not your curse, as sure I must be,
The stain, the blot of your immortal fame,
If one soft passion like a languid spell,
Dissolve thy manly fortitude of soul,
And melt the prince and patriot in the husband.

Duke. That tender union is the healing balm,
The cordial of my soul—our destinies
Are twined together—Were my single life
The only forfeit of this perilous chance,
I'd throw it, like a heedless prodigal,
And wanton with my fortune—But, alas!
More than the wealth of worlds is now at stake.
And can I hazard this dear precious pledge,
Venture my all of bliss on one bold cast,
Nor feel the conflict that now rends my heart?

Duch. Why do you tremble?—These cold struggling drops—

Duke. They fall for thee, Louisa—my quell'd spirit
Avows its weakness there.—

Duch. 'Tis cruel fondness,
It wounds me deeply, Juan.

Duke. Witness honour!
Thy martial call ne'er found Braganza's ear

Cold, till this bitter moment.—I have met,
Have courted death, in the steel'd files of war,
When squadrons wither'd as the giant trod;
Nor shrunk ev'n when the hardiest in the field
Have paused upon the danger—Here, I own,
My agonizing nerves degrade the soldier,
Ev'n to a coward's frailty—Should the sword,
Which black destruction soon may wave o'er all,
(Avert it Heaven!) strike at thy precious life,
Should but one drop, forced by rude violence,
Stain that dear bosom, I were so accursed,
The outstretch'd arm of mercy could not save me.

Duch. I have a woman's form, a woman's fears,
I shrink from pain and start at dissolution.
To shun them is great Nature's prime command;
Yet summon'd as we are, your honour pledged,
Your own just rights engaged, your country's fate,
Let threat'ning death assume his direst form,
Let dangers multiply, still would I on,
Still urge exhort, confirm thy constancy,
And though we perish'd in the bold attempt,
With my last breath I'd bless the glorious cause,
And think it happiness to die so nobly.

Duke. O thou hast roused me—From this hour I banish
Each fond solicitude that hover'd round thee:
Thy voice,—thy looks—thy soul are heaven's own fire.
'Twere impious but to doubt that pow'r ordain'd thee
To guide me to this glorious enterprize.

Duch. Thou shalt be chronicled to latest time,
Heaven's chosen instrument to punish tyrants.
The great restorer of a nation's freedom!
Thou shalt complete what Brutus but attempted:
Nor withering age, nor cold oblivion's shade,
Nor envy's cankerous tooth destroy thy wreaths;
But every friend to virtue shall inscribe

To Juan's name eternal monuments.
But see our friends approach—Awhile I leave thee—
Remember still—thou must be king or nothing.
[*Exit Duchess.*

Duke alone.

I will suppress the emotions of my heart.
Quite to subdue them is impossible.

Enter RIBIRO *and* MENDOZA.

Welcome, ye wakeful guardians of your country!
Had we in all the people's mighty mass
But twenty spirits match'd with you in virtue,
How might we bid defiance to proud Spain;
How scorn the close disguise of secret councils,
And challenge their full force in open combat!

Rib. Led by Don Juan, can we doubt th' event?
All things conspire—Antipathy to Spain
Is here hereditary—'Tis nature's instinct,
'Tis principle, religion, vital heat.
Old men to list'ning sons with their last breath
Bequeath it as a dying legacy.
Infants imbibe it at the mother's breast;
It circles with their blood, spreads with their frame,
Its fountain is the heart, and till that fails
The stream it fed can never cease to flow.

Men. That furious impulse gives the spleen of fiends
To softest tempers, the unpractised arm
Sinews with lion's strength, and drives us on
Resistless as the sweeping whirlwind's force.

Duke. All is propitious! Every post is fill'd
With officers devoted to our service:
Already in their hearts they own my title,
And wait but for our orders to proclaim it.

Enter ALMADA.

Duke. Come to my breast, my sage admonisher!
The tutor and example of my arms!
The proud Iberian soon shall feel their force;
And learn from Juan's sword to venerate
The fame of brave Almada.

Alm. Thus, my prince,
Thus did I hope to find thee. Hence no more
Shall hard exactions grind the prostrate people;
Our gentry to their provinces confined
Languish no more in shameful circumscription;
No more our ancient noblemen be stripp'd
Of all but empty titles, tinsel names,
Like tarnish'd gold on rags to mock the wearer!
Our posts of eminence no more be filled
With upstart strangers, or the sordid lees
Of base plebeian natives—

Duke. My impatient breast,
Full of the expected joy, like a young bridegroom,
Upbraids the lazy hours that lag between
My wishes and enjoyment——The onset is—

Alm. When St Vincent beats five, about that hour
We'll welcome the sun's rising with an offering
More glorious than the Persians' hecatomb.

Rib. At night your friends assemble with Almada
In dreadful secrecy—Then with rais'd arm
We rush to cancel our long debt to vengeance,
And glut our thirsty blades with Spanish gore.

Alm. If we suspend the blow beyond to-morrow
All may be lost.—Three thousand veterans
Lie canton'd on the river's southern side;
Should our design be known, they will be call'd
To reinforce the posts, and guard the city.
Adieu then to our dream of liberty!
We rivet closer chains on Portugal,

And drag the doom of traitors on ourselves.

Enter Duchess.

Duch. Suspend your consultations for a moment,
Within the minister of Spain attends;
Forgive th' officious love of your Louisa:
No stranger to his arts, she warns her Juan—

Duke. I know he comes in solemn mockery,
To make a hollow tender of his service
With most obsequious falsehood.

Duch. My best lord,
Hold strictest watch on all your words and motions;
Guard every look with that discerning villain;
Subtle, insidious, false, and plausible,
He can with ease assume all outward forms,
Seem the most honest, plain, sincere good man,
And keep his own designs lock'd close within,
While with the lynx's beam he penetrates
The deep reserve of every other breast.

Duke. I too will wear my vizor in the scene,
And play the dupe I am not.—Friends, farewell!
Perhaps ere morning we may meet again—
The hour is fix'd, Louisa;—all prepared—

Duch. Then this is our last night of slavery—
A brighter æra rises with the dawn. [*Exit Duke.*
If we may dare without impiety
To challenge heavenly aid, and swell the breast
With confidence of more than mortal vigour,
Can Heaven stand neuter in a cause like this?
Or favour fraud, oppression, cruelty,
'Gainst swords that strike, for liberty and justice?
Now, gentle friends, I am a suitress to you.

Alm. You are our sovereign, madam—'tis your right
Not to solicit, but command our duty.

Duch. Think me not light, capricious, variable,

If I who urged you to this bold attempt,
And ever when your anger seem'd to cool,
Pour'd oil to wake the flame and feed its blaze,
Now supplicate with milder earnestness,
And strive to allay its fury.
Alm. Speak your pleasure!
The obedience of our hearts will follow it!
Duch. I know the measure of your wrongs would license,
Nay, justify the wild excess of vengeance;
Yet, in the headlong rage of execution,
Think rather what your mercy may permit
Than what their crimes deserve who feel your justice.
O! follow not the example we abhor,
Nor let those weapons justice consecrates
Be dyed with drops drawn from the bleeding breast
Of reverend age, or helpless innocence.
Wilt thou take heed, Almada?
Alm. Fear not, madam;
All mercy not injurious to our cause,
Ev'n Spaniards, as they are men, from men may challenge.
For Indus' wealth I wou'd not stain this sword,
Sacred to honour, in the guiltless blood
Of unoffending wretches—rest secure,
A prostrate and defenceless enemy,
Has stronger guards against a brave man's wrath,
Than tenfold brass, or shields of adamant.
Duch. Gen'rous Almada! well dost thou instruct!
Mild pity is not more a-kin to love
Than to true valour.—Thy soft youth, Mendoza,
Need not be tutor'd to humanity.
Men. Heaven and my conscious soul bear witness for me,
That not to satiate any private malice,
But for the general good, I stand engaged

In this great compact.—'Twere a coward's vengeance
To turn a sacrifice to massacre,
And practice while I punish cruelty.

Rib. Till fortune give one victim to my rage,
Compassion and this bosom must be strangers.
No sanctuary, nor interceding prayers,
Nor wings of angels stretch'd to cover him,
Shall save that monster from the doom he merits.

Duch. You mean the minister of Spain, Velasquez.

Rib. I mean the minister of hell, Velasquez!
That cool deliberate executioner!
If he escape, may this good arm rot off,
All worthy thoughts forsake, and scorn pursue me:
Write boaster on my forehead—let my name
Blister the tongue that speaks it.—Infamy
Be here my portion, endless pains hereafter.

Duch. O would that sacrifice might expiate!—

Rib. Pardon the rash effusion of my zeal;
It deals too much in words.

Duch. Not so, Ribiro,
Thy anger has a licence;—and thy zeal
We know is generous, not sanguinary.

Alm. Madam, we take our leave—good angels guard you!
We go to prove our duty in your service.
The homage of our hearts has long been yours,
And soon you shall receive it from our knees.

Duch. Believe me, friends, your loves are written here,
In characters no time can e'er efface.

[*Exeunt* ALM. RIB. *and* MEN.

Duchess alone.

And may the mighty spirits of past times,
Rais'd by desert to bright immortal thrones,

Suspend awhile their task of heavenly praise,
In ministry unseen to hover round them!
Protect aspiring virtue like their own,
And in their bosoms breathe resistless ardour!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Apartments of VELASQUEZ *in the Palace of the Vice-Queen.*

Enter VELASQUEZ *and* PIZARRO.

Piz. You seem disturb'd—
Vel. With reason—dull Braganza
Must have been tutor'd—At our interview
I practised every supple artifice
That glides into man's bosom—The return
Was blank reserve, ambiguous compliment,
And hatred thinly veil'd by ceremony.
Piz. Might I presume—
Vel. Pizarro, I am stung—
His father Theodosius, that proud prince,

Who durst avow his enmity to Philip,
And menaced thunders at my destined head,
With all his empty turbulence of rage
Cou'd never move me like the calm disdain
Of this cold-blooded Juan.

Piz. Then, my lord,
Your purpose holds.

Vel. It does—I will dispatch
This towering duke, who keeps the cheek of Spain
Pale with perpetual danger.

Piz. For what end?
Unconscious of his fate, he blindly speeds
To find a grave in Spain—Why then resolve
To spill that blood, which elsewhere will be shed
Without your crime or peril?

Vel. That's the question.
Were I assured they meant his death, 'twere needless:
But when they draw him once from Portugal,
Where only he is dangerous, then perhaps
Their fears, or lenity, may let him live;
And while he lives, my fiery course is check'd,
My sun climbs slowly, never can ascend
To its meridian brightness.

Piz. Still, my lord,
My short-lined wisdom cannot sound your depth.

Vel. I mean to tell thee all, for thou may'st aid me,
And thy tried faith deserves my confidence.

Piz. I am your own for ever—Your kind hand,
Bounteous beyond my merit, planted here
Favours innumerable.—

Vel. Think them little—
An earnest, not the acquittal of my love.
The enormous wealth of Juan's royal house,
His large domains, extended influence,
His numerous vassals, so have swell'd his state,
That were his means but push'd to one great end,
How easy might he wrest this realm from Spain,

And brave King Philip's rage?
Piz. Good careless prince!
Mild and uxorious! No ambitious dream
Disturbs his tranquil slumber—
Vel. Just his nature!
On household wing he flutters round the roof,
That with the princely eagle might have soar'd,
And met the dazzling sun. Now by his death
(My engine cannot fail, this night he meets it)
His wealth, his mightiness, his followers
Become Louisa's dower—What think'st thou now?
Could I but win her to accept my hand,
(And much my art will move, and more my power)
Might not our union, like the impetuous course
Of blending torrents, break all feeble mounds
Spain could oppose to bar me from the crown?
That once obtain'd, let Olivarez rail,
Let his inglorious master call me traitor,
I'll scorn their idle fury.
Piz. Still I fear
Louisa's heart, cold and impenetrable
To all but Juan's love, will own no second,
Though big ambition swells her female breast
Beyond the sex's softness.
Vel. My hope rests
Even on that favourite passion—Grief at first
Will drive her far from love—A second flame
Perhaps may ne'er rekindle in her heart;
Yet, give her momentary frenzy scope,
It wastes itself; ambition then regains
Its wonted force, and winds her to my lure—
But come—I must not lose these precious moments,
The Fates are busy now—What's yet untold,
There place thyself and learn—Take heed you move not. [PIZARRO *retires*.
Without there! Ho!

Enter an Officer.

Offi. What is your lordship's pleasure?
Vel. Attends the monk, Ramirez?
Offi. He does, my lord?
Vel. Conduct him in, and leave us.—Underneath
That lowly guise of patient sanctity
Lurks a proud heart susceptible of ire
To death's extreme; ulcering with wrongs supposed
From him I mean to end.—He comes.

Enter RAMIREZ.

You are welcome,
Most welcome, reverend father—Pray draw near—
We have a business for your privacy
Of an especial nature—The circling air
Should not partake it, nor the babbling winds,
Lest their invisible wings disperse one breath
Of that main secret, which thy faithful bosom
Is only fit to treasure.
Ram. Good my lord,
I am no common talker.
Vel. Well I know it,
And therefore chose thee from the brotherhood,
Not one of whom but would lay by all thoughts
Of earth and heaven, and fly to execute
What I, the voice of Spain, commission'd him.
Ram. Vouchsafe directly to unfold your will;
My deeds, and not my words, must prove my duty.
Vel. Nay, trust me, could they but divine my purpose,
The holiest he, that wastes the midnight lamp
In prayers and penance, would prevent my tongue,

And hear me thank the deed, but not persuade it.
Therefore, good friend, 'tis not necessity
That sometimes forces any present means,
And chequers chance with wisdom, but free will,
The election of my judgment and my love,
That gives thy aptness this pre-eminence.

Ram. The state, I know, has store of instruments,
Like well-ranged arms in ready order placed,
Each for its several use.

Vel. Observe me well;
Think not I mean to snatch a thankless office;
Who serves the state, while I direct her helm,
Commands my friendship, and his own reward.
Say, can you be content in these poor weeds
To know no earthly hopes beyond a cloister?
But stretch'd on musty mats in noisome caves,
To rouse at midnight bells, and mutter prayers
For souls beyond their reach, to senseless saints?
To wage perpetual war with nature's bounty?
To blacken sick men's chambers, and be number'd
With the loath'd leavings of mortality,
The watch-light, hour-glass, and the nauseous phial?
Are these the ends of life? Was this fine frame,
Nerves exquisitely textured, soft desires,
Aspiring thoughts, this comprehensive soul,
With all her train of god-like faculties,
Given to be sunk in this vile drudgery?

Ram. These are the hard conditions of our state.
We sow our humble seeds with toil on earth,
To reap the harvest of our hopes in heaven.

Vel. Yet wiser they who trust no future chance,
But make this earth a heaven. Raise thy eyes
Up to the temporal splendours of our church;
Behold our priors, prelates, cardinals;
Survey their large revenues, princely state,
Their palaces of marble, beds of down,
Their statues, pictures, baths, luxurious tables,

That shame the fabled banquets of the gods.
See how they weary art, and ransack nature
To leave no taste, no wish ungratified.
Now—if thy spirit shrink not—I can raise thee
To all this pomp and greatness.—Pledge thy faith,
Swear thou wilt do this thing—whate'er I urge,
And Lisbon's envied crozier shall be thine.

Ram. This goodness, so transcending all my hopes,
Confounds my astonish'd sense.—Whate'er it be
Within the compass of man's power to act,
I here devote me to the execution.

Vel. I must not hear of conscience and nice scruples,
Tares that abound in none but meagre soils,
To choak the aspiring seeds of manly daring:
Those puny instincts, which in feeble minds,
Unfit for great exploits, are miscall'd virtue.

Ram. Still am I lost in dark uncertainty;
And must for ever wander, till thy breath
Deign to dispel the impenetrable mist,
Fooling my sight that strives in vain to pierce it.

Vel. You are the Duke Braganza's confessor,
And fame reports him an exact observer
Of all our church's holy ceremonies.
He still is wont, whene'er he visits Lisbon,
Ere grateful slumber seal his pious lids,
With all due reverence, from some priestly hand
To take the mystic symbol of our faith.

Ram. It ever was his custom, and this night
I am commanded to attend his leisure
With preparation for the solemn act.

Vel. I know it—Take (*Gives him a box.*) thou this
—It holds a wafer
Of sovereign virtue to enfranchise souls,
Too righteous for this world, from mortal cares.
A monk of Milan mix'd the deadly drug,
Drawn from the quintessence of noxious plants,
Minerals and poisonous creatures, whose dull bane

Arrests the nimble current of life's tide,
And kills without a pang.
Ram. I knew him well,
The Carmelite Castruccio, was it not?
Vel. The same, he first approved it on a wretch
Condemn'd for murder to the ling'ring wheel.
This night commit it to Braganza's lips.
Had he a heart of iron, giant strength,
The antidotes of Pontus—all were vain,
To struggle with the venom's potency.
Ram. This night, my lord?
Vel. This very night; nay, shrink not,
Unless thou mean'st to take the lead in death,
And pull thy own destruction on thy head.
Ram. Give me a moment's pause—A deed like this—
Vel. Should be at once resolved and executed.
Think'st thou I am a raw unpractised novice,
To make thy breast a partner to the trust,
And not thy hand accomplice of the crime?
Why 'tis the bond for my security:
Look not amazed, but mark me heedfully.
Thou hast thy choice—dispatch mine enemy;
The means are in thy hand—be safe and great,
Or instantly prepare thee for a death
Which nothing but compliance can avert.
Ram. Numbers I know even thus have tasted death,
But sure imagination scarce can form
A way so horrid, impious!
Vel. How's this, how's this!
Hear me, pale miscreant, my rage once roused,
That hell thou dread'st this moment shall receive thee.
Look here and tremble—
[*Draws a dagger, and seizes him.*
Ram. My lord, be not so rash,

Your fury's deaf—Will you not hear me speak?
By ev'ry hope that cheers, all vows that bind,
Whatever horror waits upon the act,
Your will shall make it justice—I'm resolved.

Vel. No trifling, monk—take heed, for should'st thou fail—

Ram. Then be my life the forfeit—My obedience
Not only follows from your high command,
But that my bosom swells against this duke
With the full sense of my own injuries.—

Vel. Enough—I thank thee—Let me know betimes
How we have prosper'd. Hence, retire with caution,
Deserve my favour, and then meet me boldly.

[*Exit* RAM.

'Tis done—His doom is seal'd—Come forth, Pizarro.

[PIZARRO *comes forward.*

Is't not a subtle mischief?

Piz. Past all praise:
The holy tool had qualms.

Vel. (*Pointing to his dagger.*) But this dispell'd them,
And fortified the coward by his fears.
His work perform'd, I mean to end him too.—
Say, is my barge prepared as I commanded?

Piz. All is prepared, my lord.

Vel. The friends of Juan,
(I'll tell thee as we pass) they shall not long
Survive to lift their crests so high in Lisbon.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Castle of ALMADA.

Enter ALMADA *and an Attendant.*

Alm. Good Perez, see that none to-night have entrance
But such whose names are written in that roll,
And bid your fellows from the northern tower
Choose each a faulchion, and prepare to follow
Where I at dawn will lead.
Atten. I will, my lord.
Alm. Wait near the gate thyself, nor stir from thence
Without my summons.
Atten. Trust my vigilance. (*Exit Attendant.*

ALMADA *alone.*

Now rayless midnight flings her sable pall
Athwart the horizon, and with pond'rous mace
In dead repose weighs down o'er-labour'd nature,
While we, the busy instruments of fate,
Unmindful of her season, wake like ghosts,
To add new horrors to the shadowy scene.

To him enter several of the Duke of BRAGANZA'S *Friends.*

Ant. Health to Almada.
Alm. Thus to meet, Antonio!
Is the best health, the soundness of the mind.
Better at this dark hour to embrace in arms,
Thus girt for manly execution, friend!
Than in the mazes of the wanton dance,

Or revelling o'er bowls in frantic mirth,
To keep inglorious vigils.
Ant. True, my lord.

Enter RIBIRO *with* LEMOS *and* COREA.

Alm. (*To* RIB.) O soul of honour, ever, ever constant!
These are the worthy citizens, our friends—
Rib. (*Presenting* LEM. *and* COR.) And such as laurell'd Rome might well have own'd
Worthy to fill her magisterial chairs,
When reverence bow'd to virtue though untitled.
Alm. As such I take their hands; nay more, as such
Their grateful country will rejoice to own them.
Are we all met?
Ant. Mendoza is not here,
Nor Roderic, and Mello too is absent.
Alm. They were not wont to be thus waited for.
Rib. Anon they will be here,—mean time proceed,
They know their place already—
Alm. Why we meet,
Is not to canvass our opprobrious wrongs,
But to redress them.—Yet as trumpets sound,
To rouse the soldier's ardour,—so the breath
Of our calamities will wake our fires,
And fan them to spread wide the flame of vengeance.
'Tis not my gift to play the orator,
But in plain words to lay our state before you.
Our tyrant's grandsire, whose ambition claim'd,
And first usurp'd Braganza's royal rights,
By blood establish'd his detested sway.
Old Tagus blush'd with many a crimson tide,
Sluiced from the noblest veins of Portugal.
The exterminating sword knew no distinction;
Princes, and prelates, venerable age,

Matrons and helpless virgins fell together,
Till cloy'd and sick of slaughter, the tired soldier,
With grim content, flung down his reeking steel,
And glutted rage gave truce to massacre.

Rib. Nor pass'd the iron rod to milder hands
Through two succeeding reigns—With cruel zeal
The barbarous offspring emulate their sire,
And track his bloody footsteps in our ruin.

Alm. Now mark how happily the time conspires,
To give our great atchievement permanence;
Spain is not what she was, when Europe bow'd
To the fifth Charles and his degenerate son;
When, like a torrent swell'd by mountain floods,
She swept the neighbouring nations with her arms,
And threaten'd those remote:—contracted now
Within an humble bed, the thrifty urn
Of her exhausted greatness, scarce can pour
A lazy tide through her own mould'ring states.

Rib. Yes, the colossus totters: every blast
Shakes the stupendous mass, and threats its downfall.

Enter MENDOZA.

Men. Break off—break off—the fatal snare is spread,
And death's pale hand assists to close the toil.

Alm. Whence this dread greeting?—Ha—thy alter'd cheek,
Wears not the ensign of this glowing hour.

Men. The scream of night owls, or the raven's croak
Would better suit the baleful news I bring,
Than the known accents of a friendly voice.
—We are undone—betray'd—

Alm. Say'st thou—betray'd?

Men. Our tower is sapp'd—the high-raised fabric falls
To crush us with the ruin—What avails

The full maturity of all our hopes?
This glorious league—the justice of our cause?—
—High Heaven might idly thunder on our side,
If traitors to ourselves.
Alm. Ourselves—Oh shame!
I'll not believe it—What perfidious slaves—
Men. Two whom we thought the sinews of our strength,
Don Roderic and Mello.
Rib. Lightnings blast them!
May infamy record their dastard names,
And vulgar villains shun their fellowship—
These hot, loud brawlers—
Men. Are the slaves of Spain,
And bargain for the price of perfidy.—
On to the wharf with quick impatient step,
I saw Velasquez press, and in his train
These lurking traitors.—Now, even now, they cross
The ebbing Tagus in the tyrant's barge,
And hasten to the fort.—The troops of Spain,
Even while we speak, are summon'd to the charge,
And mark us for their prey.
Alm. Nay then, 'tis past.
Malignant fortune, when the cup was raised
Close to our lips, has dash'd it to the ground.
Rib. This unexpected bolt strikes flat our hopes,
And leaves one dreary desolation round us.
I see their hangmen muster—wolf-eyed cruelty,
Grimly sedate, glares o'er her iron hoard
Of racks, wheels, engines, feels her axe's edge,
Licks her fell jaws, and with a monster's thirst,
Already drinks our blood.
Men. There's not a pang
That rends the fibres of man's feeling frame,
No vile disgrace, that even in thought o'erspreads
The cheek with burning crimson, but her hate,
Ingenious to devise, and sure to inflict,
In keenest agony will make us suffer.

Alm. Would that were all—Our dismal scene must close;
Nature o'erpower'd, at length will leave her load,
And baffle persecution.—But O, Portugal!
Alas, unhappy country! Where's the bourn
Can mark the extent of thy calamities!
Like winter's icy hand, our luckless end
Will freeze the source of future enterprize:
Oppression then o'er the devoted realm
Erect and bold will stalk with tenfold ravage.
There, there alone, this breast is vulnerable;
These are the wheels that wrench, the racks that tear me.

Ant. But are there left no means to elude the danger?
Why do we linger here?—Why not resolve
To save ourselves by flight?

Men. Impossible!
The guards no doubt are set—the port is barr'd.

Alm. Fly, Lemos, to the people, and restrain
Their generous ardour.—It would now break forth
Useless to us, and fatal to themselves. [*Exit* LEMOS.
You to the duke, Ribiro!—In our names,
(Perhaps our last request) by our lost fortunes,
By all our former friendship, O conjure him
To save our richest treasure from the wreck,
Nor hazard in a desperate enterprize
His country's last best hope, his valued life.

Rib. Support him, Heaven, and arm his piety
To bear this sad vicissitude with patience.
[*Exit* RIBIRO.

Alm. And yet we will not meet in vain, brave friends;
We came with better hopes, resolved like men
To struggle for our freedom.—What remains?
A greater power than mortals can arraign,
Has otherwise decreed it.—Speak, my brothers,
Now doubly dear in stern adversity;

Say, shall we glut the spoiler with our blood,
Submit to the vile insults of their law,
To have our honest dust by ruffian hands
Given to the winds—Is this the doom that waits us?

Men. Alas, what better doom? To ask for mercy
Were ignominious, to expect it bootless.

Alm. To ask for mercy—could Spain stretch my life
To years beyond the telling, for one tear,
One word, in sign of sorrow, I'd disdain it.
Death still is in our power—and we'll die nobly,
As soldiers should do, red with well-earn'd wounds,
And stretch'd on heaps of slaughter'd enemies.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in the Duke of BRAGANZA'S *Palace.*

Duch. (*Alone.*) O thou supreme disposer of the world!
If from my childhood to this awful now,
To all thy great immutable decrees
I've bent with meek submission, hear, O hear me!

Send to thy feeble suppliant one blest beam
Of that bright emanation, which inspires
True confidence in thee, to calm the throbs
That heave this bosom for my husband's safety,
And with immortal spirit to exalt
Above all partial ties our country's love.

Enter to her RIBIRO *hastily.*

Rib. Where is the duke? O pardon, gracious madam!

Duch. What means this haste and these distracted looks?

Rib. Detain me not—but lead me to my lord—
His life, perhaps—nay, yours—

Duch. His life—O, heavens!
Tell me, Ribiro—speak—

Rib. Too soon, alas,
You'll hear it—Ask not now, dear lady,
What I've scarce breath to utter—Where's the duke?

Duch. This moment with his confessor retired
I left him in his closet.

Rib. —'Tis no time—
All must give place to this dire urgency.
Even while we speak—A moment's precious now,
He must be interrupted—Guide me to him.

Duch. Suspense is lingering death.—Come on, I'll lead you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter RAMIREZ.

Ram. O welcome interruption—Pitying Heaven
A while at least arrests the murderous deed,
And gives a moment's respite from damnation.
—Is there a hell beyond this war of conscience?
My blood runs backward, and my tottering knees
Refuse to bear their sacrilegious load.
Methought the statues of his ancestors,
As I pass'd by them, shook their marble heads;

His father's picture seem'd to frown in wrath,
And its eye pierce me, while I trembling stood
Assassin-like before it—Hush—I'm summon'd.

Re-enter Duchess.

Duch. Get you to rest, good father—Fare you well.
Some unexpected business of the state
Demands my lord's attention—For this night
Your holy function must be unperform'd
Till more convenient season.

Ram. Holy function !— [*Aside.*
I humbly take my leave, and will not fail
To recommend you in my prayers to Heaven.
[*Exit* RAMIREZ.

Duch. The Heavens, I fear, are shut, and will not hear them.
—Now gush, my tears—now break at once, my heart!
While in my Juan's presence, I suppress'd
The bursting grief—But here give nature way !
Is there a hope—Oh no—All horrible—
My children too—Their little lives—My husband—
I conquer'd his reluctance—I persuaded
By every power his boundless passion gave me—
I thought it virtue too—Mysterious Heaven !—
Then I, and only I, have work'd his ruin.

Enter Duke.

Duke. Alas, my love, why must thy Juan seek thee ?
Why dost thou shun me at this awful moment ?
The few sad hours our destiny permits
Should sure be spent together.

Duch. Must we part then ?

Duke. I fear we must for ever in this world,
Till that great Power, who fashion'd us in life,
Unites us once again no more to sever,
In those blest regions of eternal peace,

Where sorrow never enters, where thy truth,
Thy unexampled fortitude and sweetness,
Will meet their full reward.
Duch. Where is the friend
Who rung our dismal knell?
Duke. Good, generous man!
Assured of death, yet careless of his life,
And anxious but for us, he is return'd,
To know what our brave leaders will determine—
Yet what can they determine but to die?
Our numbers poorly arm'd, undisciplined,
May fight and fall with desperate obstinacy,
For valour can no more—But, oh, Louisa!
Friends, country, life itself, all lost seem little;
One sharp devouring grief consumes the rest,
And makes thee all its object.
Duch. My dear husband!
These soft endearments, this excess of fondness,
Strike deeper to my soul, than all the pangs
The subtlest vengeance could contrive to wound me.
Oh fly me, hate me, call me murderess;
'Tis I have driven thee to this precipice,
I urge the ruffian hand of law to seize thee,
I drag thee to the block,—I lift the axe,
(Oh agony!) Louisa dooms thee dead!
Duke. —'Tis anguish insupportable to hear thee
Add self-upbraidings to our misery.
Thou my destroyer! No, my best Louisa,
Thou art my guardian angel.—At this hour,
This dreadful hour, 'tis safety to be near thee.
Those dastards who betray'd our brave design,
That baseness which no caution could prevent,
Nor wisdom could foresee, 'twas that undid us.
I will not curse them—Yet I swear by honour,
Thus hunted to the utmost verge of fate,
Without one ray of hope to cheer the danger,
I would not barter this dire certainty,

For that ignoble life those bad men purchase
By perfidy and vileness—
Duch. Oh two such—
But indignation wants a tongue to name them.
How was their fury thunder'd on our side!
Their youthful veins full of patrician blood—
Insulted by Velasquez—stript by Spain
Of all the ancient honours of their house;
Sworn at the altar to assert this cause
By holiest adjurations:—Yet these two
To turn apostates—Can this fleeting breath,
This transitory, frail, uncertain being,
Be worth so vast a ransom?
Duke. Yes, to cowards:
Such ever be the proselytes of Spain!—
Leave them to scorn.—Fain would I turn my thoughts
From this bad world—shake off the clogs of earth,
And for that great tribunal arm my soul,
Where Heaven, not Spain, must judge me—but in vain;
My soften'd mind still hangs on those blest days,
Those years of sweet tranquillity and peace,
When smiling morn but waked us to new joys,
And love at night shed blessings on our pillow.
Duch. These hours are fled, and never can return.
'Tis Heaven's high will, and be that will obey'd.
The retrospect of past felicity
Plucks not the barbed arrow from the wound,
But makes it rankle deeper.—Come, my Juan,
Here bid adieu to this infectious grief,
Let's knit our constancy to meet the trial:
Shall we be bold in words, mere moral talkers?
Declaim with pedant tongue in virtue's praise,
Yet find no comfort, no support within,
From her bright energy?—It comes—it comes,
I feel my breast dilate—The phantom Death
Shrinks at the radiant vision—bright-eyed Hope

Bids us aspire, and points the shining throne.—
—Spain, I defy thee!

Duke. O would she hew the elm,
And spare the tender vine—This stubborn trunk
Should brave her fury. Here is royal blood,
And blood long thirsted for.—They cannot dare,
Insatiate as they are, remorseless, savage,
With sacrilegious hands to violate
This beauteous sanctuary.—Let me not think.—
Distraction—horror—Oh it splits my brain,
Rends every vital string, and tears my heart.
Mercy can grant no more—nor I petition,
Than to fall dead this instant and forget it.
I look towards Heaven in vain.—Gape wide, O earth,
And bury, bury deep this load of anguish!

Duch. Be not so lost.—Hear, Oh hear me, Juan,
My lord, my life, my love.—Wilt thou not speak?
He heeds me not.—What shall I say to move him?
For pity's sake look up.—Oh think, Braganza,
Could Spain behold thee thus—

Duke. Oh no, Louisa,
No eye shall see me melt.—I will be calm,
Still, silent, motionless.—Oh tough, tough heart,
Would I could weep to ease thee!—

Duch. Here, weep here,
Pour the warm stream into this faithful breast,
Thy sorrows here shall find a kindred source,
Which flows for every tear with drops of blood.
Now summon all thy soul.—Behold, he comes
To thunder our irrevocable doom.

Enter RIBIRO.

Rib. O for an angel's organ to proclaim
Such gratulations as no tongue can speak,
Nor mortal breast conceive—joy, boundless joy!

Duke. Am I awake?—Thou can'st not mean to mock me.

Rib. I shall go wild with transport.—On my knee
I beg you to forgive the cruel shock
This tongue (Heaven knows with what severe reluctance)
So lately gave to all your dearest hopes.
Duke. No, let me take that posture: for I swear,
Though yet I know not why, my lighten'd heart
Beats freer, and seems eased of half its burthen.
—Forgive my strong impatience—quickly tell me.
Rib. Still ignorant of our intended vengeance,
Velasquez is return'd.—Our gallant friends
Were wrong'd by rash suspicion.—
Duke. Heard I right?
Or is't illusion all? (*Embracing him*) Thus let me thank thee.
Louisa then is safe.—Fountain of mercy!
These late despairing arms again enfold her,
My queen, my love, my wife!—
Duch. Flow, flow, my tears;
Take, bounteous lord of all, this melting tribute,
My heart can give no more for all thy goodness.
Duke. And now disclose this wonder.
Rib. Thus, my lord.
When at the appointed time, our two brave friends
Were hastening to Almada, near the square
Velasquez and his followers crossed their steps,
Their course seem'd towards the river:—struck with fear,
And ignorant what cause at that late hour
Could draw him from the palace, straight they changed
Their first intent of joining our assembly,
And unobserved pursued the attending train.
Think what these brave men suffer'd when they saw
The tyrant climb his barge, and push from shore.
Their swords were half unsheath'd, both half resolved
To rush at once, and pierce him to the heart.
—But prudence, or our fortune, check'd their hands.
Duke. It had been certain ruin—but go on—

Rib. An instant pass'd in thought, they seized a boat,
And following, anxious hung on all his motions:
Mendoza saw them thus—then hurrying back,
Fill'd us with consternation at the tidings.
Duch. Nor was it strange—it wore a dreadful aspect;
But fear interprets all things to its danger.
Rib. He cross'd the river where Jago's fort
Commands the narrowing stream. The governor
Attended at the gate; a while there pass'd
In short but earnest converse, they took leave:
With hasty strides Velasquez reimbark'd;
The vessel, to the shore she left, return'd,
And her proud master sought again the palace.
Duch. Could not our valiant friends discover aught
That might reveal his purpose?
Rib. Madam—No.
To have inquired too near were dangerous.
Besides, their haste to reassure our hopes
Press'd their return—But thus we may resolve:
He apprehends some danger imminent.
He sees above his head a gathering cloud,
But knows not when 'twill burst in thunder on him.
Duke. Thanks, gentle friend—Alas, I tremble still;
As just escaped from shipwreck, I look round,
And though I tread on earth,—firm, solid earth,
See with broad eye the threatning surge far off:
Scarce can I credit my conflicting sense,
Or trust our preservation—
Duch. Thy glad tale
Has raised me from the gulph of black despair,
Even to the topmost pinnacle of joy.
Yes, we shall conquer—All these dangers past
Will serve but to enrich the future story.
Our children's children shall recount each fear,
And from the mingled texture of our lives,

Learn to revere that sacred providence
That guides the strife of virtue.

Duke. O, Louisa!
I thought I knew the extent of all my fondness,
That long acquaintance with thy wondrous virtue
Had given thee such dominion o'er my soul,
Time could not add to my transcendent passion;
But when the danger came, it waked new fires,
Presented thee in softer loveliness,
And twined thee closer here.

Rib. My lord, ere this
Our friends expect me.

Duke. Let us fly to meet them.
I long to pour into their generous breasts
My cordial greeting.

Duch. Go, my dearest Juan,
To them and all commend me; such rare zeal
Merits more recompence than our poor thanks
Can at the best requite. For souls like theirs
Ill brook the indignity of foul surmise;
And virtue wrong'd demands a double homage.
[*Exit Duch.*

Duke. If the good augury of my breast deceive not,
No more such terrors will appal our souls,
But guilt alone shall tremble—Come, Ribiro.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Castle of ALMADA.

ALMADA *and several Conspirators, as before, with* MELLO *and* RODERIC.

Alm. Again our hopes revive—The unloaded stem
Shakes the wet tempest from its vigorous head,
And rears the swelling harvest to our sight.
Men. After the chillings of this aguish fear,
Methinks I breathe more free—the vital stream
In sprightlier tides flows through its wonted course,
Warms my whole frame, and doubly mans my heart.
Alm. And may the generous ardour spread to all—
Observe me, friends,—our numbers must divide
Into four equal bands, all to attack
At the bell's signal the four palace gates.
So every passage barr'd, the foe in vain
May strive to unite and overwhelm our force.
Myself with the brave few, who have sworn to follow,
Will rush impetuous on the German guard,
Who at the northern entrance hold their station.
—The fort be Roderic and Mello's care,
With Ferdinand, Henriquez, and Antonio.
—Mendoza, Carlos, and their gallant troop
Must seize the regent Margaret, and secure
The counsellors of Spain as hostages
For the surrender of the citadel.
Men. Letters to every province are dispersed,
Importing this great change, and all are ready
To shake to earth the intolerable yoke:
Nay, distant India, in her sultry mines,

Shall hear the cheerful sound of liberty;
Again fair commerce, welcomed to our shore,
Shall loose her swelling canvas to the winds,
And golden Tagus heave once more to meet her.
But see the duke.—

Enter Duke.

Alm. Your unexpected presence,
Like a propitious omen, cheers the night,
And gives a royal sanction to this meeting.
Duke. My wish surpass'd my speed.—A call like this
Might imp the tardiness of feeble age.
The general perseverance in our cause
Transcends all gratitude—but these wrong'd virtues—
Say what atonement can increased esteem
Make for our rash suspicions?
[*To* MELLO *and* RODERIC.
Mel. Pray forbear;
The painful error brought its punishment.
Ribiro bore our duties to your grace?
Duke. He did, and soon will join us—On our way
He left me with design once more to view
The posture of the guards; for still we fear
Some dark impending mischief from Velasquez.
Alm. Whatever fortune waits upon our swords,
Your highness must not share the common hazard,
Lest in the tumult some inglorious chance
Deprive your country of its last best bulwark.
Duke. And should I merit to be call'd her bulwark,
Or rank with men like you, could I submit
To hear and not partake the glorious danger?
Alm. Pray be advised—in this I must command.
Duke. Then be it so—but yet, should aught betide
To claim the interest of thy prince's arm,
I cannot wrong our friendship to suspect
You will forbear my summons to the field.

Alm. Trust your Almada—Lo! the night wears fast;
Nor are our scatter'd numbers yet return'd.
Duke. Welcome, Ribiro! What intelligence?

Enter RIBIRO.

Rib. The worst if we delay—Oh had your eyes
Beheld the sight that blasted mine!
Duke. What sight?
Rib. Lemos is seiz'd this moment, and Pizarro,
The ready tool of fell Velasquez' crimes,
Leads him to prison.
Duke. Soon we'll wrench the gates,
And from their gloomy caverns draw to light
All that remains of those unhappy men,
Whom unarraign'd, unheard, the tyrant's nod
Consign'd to horrors nature shakes to think of.
Alm. His triumph will be short—The subtle fiend
May league with hell to thwart us—but in vain;
His fate or ours must quickly be decided.
Rib. Even now it seems his demon whispers him
His audit is at hand, and scares his soul.
Anxious at this late hour he walks his chamber,
Nor seeks the season's rest; and, still more strange,
The palace guards stretch'd by their glimmering fires,
Their arms cast by, lie wrapt in thoughtless sleep.
Duke. Anon we'll rouse them with so loud a peal,
That death's dull ear shall hear it.
Alm. Corea!
Soon as our work begins, your hardy tribes
Must through the streets proclaim Don Juan king.
Press towards the palace; should our friends give ground,
Sustain their fainting strength.
Cor. We will not fail.
Alm. The general suffrage to thy sword, Ribiro,
Commits our master work; a deed so envied

That ev'ry trenchant steel of Portugal
(Did not thy gallant zeal demand it first)
Would strike to share the glory.

Rib. (*Pointing to his sword.*) This shall thank you,
And if it reek not with his hated blood,
Exchange it for a distaff.

Alm. Friends, I mean not
By gloomy presage to allay your ardour:
We must not look to fortune in this cause,
But on ourselves rely for sure success.
The least disorder in our bold approach,
The least repulse, may drive our engine back:
One brave man's rashness, or one coward's fear,
Turns all our fairest hopes to shame and ruin.

Duke. Now to our stations—Yet, ere we depart,
This honest pledge, the soldier's short embrace.
The sweet remembrance, if we fall for freedom,
Will more than soften half the pains of dying;
But if we meet, in stronger clasps renew'd,
Will double all the joys of victory. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The Apartments of VELASQUEZ *in the royal Palace.*

Vel. (*Alone.*) Why am I haunted by these phantom fears?
It cannot be my fate. 'Tis nature's weakness:
The spirits raised too high, like billows, puff'd
By sudden storms, lift up our little bark,
Then slipping from their burthen, sink as fast,
And leave it wreck'd and foundering.

Enter PIZARRO.

Vel. Have you, as I commanded, question'd Lemos?
Piz. Just now I left him.
Vel. Has the slave confess'd?
Piz. With sullen calmness he defies your power,
Or answers but with scorn.
Vel. We'll find the means
To make him speak more plainly, to bring down
This daring spirit—He is dangerous;
And under the fair mask of public virtue,
Combines with proud Almada and the rest
In dark confed'racy against my state.
Piz. He is, my lord, the master-spring that moves
The factious populace.
Vel. I know it well,
But I have ta'en such care as shall unhinge

Their ill-contrived designs. Ere noon to-morrow,
Don Garcia, with the Spanish veterans
From Saint Jago's fortress, shall pour in,
And bend these stubborn necks to due obedience.
How will their disappointed fury rave
To find their royal demagogue, Braganza,
The idol their vain worship raised so high,
Low levell'd with the earth!—I wonder much
Ramirez not returns—Night's latest watch
Will soon be told.

Piz. Perhaps he but delays
(For better welcome) to behold the effect
Of the dire venom, and to glad your ears
By telling how your enemy expired.

Vel. It may be so, I cannot doubt the effect;
Poison administer'd will do its work,
And this most speedily; 'tis swift perdition.
Yet, though this hour cuts off my greatest foe,
If my firm soul were capable of fear,
I might distrust the promise of my fortunes.

Piz. Wherefore, my lord?

Vel. I almost blush to tell it.
Tired with the travel of this anxious night,
I threw me on my couch, and try'd to rest;
I try'd in vain—my vexed lids scarce closed;
Or when a momentary slumber seal'd them,
Strange visions swam before their twilight sense;
—But why retrace the hideous phantasy?
Yet still it hovers round me, still remains
A fearful reverence of the past illusion.

Piz. Such reverence but degrades a noble mind,
And sinks its vigour to an infant's weakness.
Beldams and priests infuse these idle fears,
And turn the milk of nature to its bane.

[*Noise at a distance.*

Vel. Heard you that noise? Didst thou not mark, Pizarro?
The monk has kept his word—'Tis Juan's knell:

His followers who shouted him at noon,
Now wail his death.—My genius now has room;
Their sorrows are my triumph, and proclaim
Assured succes to my aspiring soul.

Piz. Sure 'tis the din of clashing arms—again—
It comes this way—

Enter Officer with his sword drawn.

Vel. Ha! bleeding—Speak!
Know you the cause?—Speak, instant speak!—

Offi. Too well!
The raging multitude have forced their way;
Their cry is, Where's the tyrant?—Where's Velasquez?
Don Juan's at their head, and guides the storm.

Vel. Juan alive! eternal silence seize thee!
Impossible!

Offi. These eyes, my lord, beheld him—
Saw his raised arm—

Vel. Ha! am I then betray'd!
Perdition catch Ramirez—You, Pizarro,
Collect my scatter'd train—I'll forth, and meet
The rebel's sword.

Piz. Be not so rash,
Nor venture singly— [*Exit* VEL.

Offi. He rushes on his death.
Two of my soldiers are already slain,
Striving to bar the outward palace gates;
Where, like a tide, the frantic people press,
Bearing down all before them.

Piz. Hence, begone;
The uproar's louder—Wake the sleeping grooms—
Bid them bring arms—Alarm the magistrates—
Send to the guard, and draw them to the square.
[*Exit Officer.*

Re-enter VELASQUEZ.

Vel. Ruin'd! undone! all's lost—the streets are throng'd
With raging citizens—a furious band
Of armed Portugueze just now are mounting,
Fate's bloody book is open'd, and I read
My dreadful doom: yet I'll not tamely yield,
But grapple to the last with destiny.

Piz. All is not lost—perhaps some means are left.

Vel. Just at the gate I met the dastard monk
Struggling for entrance—scarce his breath sufficed
To tell me that our purpose had miscarried,
And Juan lives—I stabbed him to the heart,
The best reward for unperforming fear.

Piz. Think not of him—but save yourself by flight.

Vel. Where can I fly?—I am beset, devoted—
Our foes like famish'd blood-hounds are abroad,
And have us in the wind.

Piz. Resolve at once.—
The postern's yet unforced; that way escape,
Disguise yourself, and fly to Juan's palace.
'Tis but the terrace length—Implore his mercy;
It is the foolish weakness of his nature
To spare where he may punish.

Vel. Ask my life!
No, rather let me perish—Hold—his wife—
Perhaps alone, unguarded—If I fall,
I'll leave a scorpion in the traitor's breast,
Shall make him curse the hour he roused my fury.
[*Exit.*

Piz. (*Alone.*) Now let the tempest rise—Oh, fickle fortune!
This moment mounted to thy giddy top,
Now whirl'd to earth and grovelling—Hark—they come.

Rib. (*Entering with others.*) Search all the chambers—If the villain 'scape
Our work's but half accomplish'd—
Piz. Pass no farther.
Rib. This is the tyrant's bosom counsellor.
Where is thy master, Spaniard?
Piz. Safe, I hope,
From lawless rage like thine, and still will live
To punish this outrageous violence.
Rib. Insolent slave—and yet I like thy courage.
'Tis vain to strive, deliver up thy sword.
I will not force thee to betray thy master,
Perfidious as he is—Even in a foe
I can discern a virtue and esteem it.
Gonsalez, guard him safe—the rest disperse,
And leave no place unsearch'd—He must be found:
But by your loves I charge you kill him not.
Rob not my sword, but leave that stroke for me.
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

The Duke of BRAGANZA'S *Palace.*

Enter Duchess, an Attendant following.

Duch. No, Ines, no, I love my husband much,
But more his honour. Could I press his stay
In tame inaction here to wait the event,
While almost in his sight, his crown and glory
Hung on the doubtful fate of others swords?
Would he have heard me? No, I knew him better.
Soon as Almada's danger reach'd his ear,
Who, twice repulsed, could scarce renew the charge,

He snatch'd his sword, and, breaking from my arms,
(Swift as a javelin cuts the whistling air)
Rush'd to the fight, and join'd the warring throng.
Ines. That favouring power which has so oft preserved,
Will not forsake him now.
Duch. O grant it, Heaven!
Go, Ines, to the terrace, and observe
If any friend (for sure I may expect it)
Bring tidings from my husband. [*Exit* INES.
Would this arm,
This feeble arm, had strength to second him!
The conflict here is worse.—My restless heart,
Swell'd with eventful expectation, throbs
And feels its bounds too narrow.—Fear on fear,
Like light reflected from the dancing wave,
Visits all places, but can rest in none.
The distant shouts, that break the morning sky,
Lift up a while my mounting thoughts to heaven,
Then sinking, leave them to fall down as low,
In boding apprehension.—Welcome, welcome!

Enter MENDOZA.

What of my lord?
Men. He bade me fly to greet you;
Himself a while detain'd to stop the rage
Of cruelty and carnage.
Duch. He returns
Unhurt, victorious to these happy arms?
Men. All, all your fondest wish could form he brings,
Crown, conquest, all.—Oppression is no more;
Pierced by a thousand wounds, the giant dies,
While free-born men with fearless gaze walk round,
And view the monster's bulk.
Duch. I would know more.—
Was it a dear-bought triumph? Must we mourn
The fall of many friends?

Men. Scarce one of note
But lives to share our joy.—The regent seized,
Gave orders for the citadél's surrender,
To save the threaten'd lives of the whole council,
Whom sleeping we secured.—Poorly content
To obey her mandate, though he knew it forced,
The dastard governor resign'd his charge,
And struck the Asturian banner.—Such the power
Of Juan's royal name and conquering arm.
The rest himself will tell.—I must return.—
Abroad the wild commotion rages still;
The king may want my service—Angels guard you.
[*Exit* MEN.

Duch. O fly, begone, lose not a thought on me.
Now to thy rest, my soul, thy prayers are heard.
From this white hour the bright revolving sun
With kinder beams shall view this smiling land;
A grateful people, by my Juan's arm,
Rescued from shameful bonds, shall bless his name,
And own him their preserver. (*Enter* INES.) From my lord?

Ines. Madam, not yet—A stranger at the gate,
Disguised, and almost breathless with his fears,
With earnest importunity entreats
He may have leave to cast him at your feet.
His accents moved me much; he seems afflicted.

Duch. Some wretch escaped from the pursuer's rage,
And flies for shelter here.—Yes, let him come.
[*Exit* INES.

Duch. (*Alone.*) Would I could save them all—my woman's soul,
Forced from her place in this tumultuous scene,
But ill supports the assumed severity,
And finds her native seat in soft compassion.

Enter VELASQUEZ, *disguised.*

Whoe'er thou art, be safe.—The greedy sword

Will have enough of death, and well may spare
One fugitive, who shuns its cruel edge
To wait the stroke of nature.—Trust thy safety.—
Why do thy doubtful eyes so oft look round?
Here are no enemies.—My word is pass'd
Inviolable as recorded oaths.——
—Methinks I have seen that face.—Say, art thou not—

Vel. The man you most should fear, most hate.

Duch. Velasquez!

Vel. Yes, that devoted wretch, the lost Velasquez;
From the high top of proud prosperity,
Sunk to this ignominy.

Duch. Presumptuous man!
If mercy could know bounds, thy monstrous crimes
Almost exceed them.—Speak then, what could urge thee
To seek the shelter of this hostile roof,
And trust a virtue to thy soul a stranger?

Vel. Fate left no second choice.—The stag pursued,
If panting at the hunter's feet he falls,
The noble nature spares him. At my heels
Revenge and death insatiate followed close:
Fear lent me speed, and this way wing'd my flight.
Why flash those eyes with anger?—Royal lady!
Fortune has stripp'd me of the power to injure;
A stingless serpent, a poor fang-drawn lion,
Fitter for scorn than terror.—

Duch. Thou art fallen!
Yet let me not insult thy alter'd state,
By pity or upbraiding.—If thy life
Be worth the acceptance, take it, and hereafter
Wash out the foulness of thy former deeds
By penitence and better purposes. [*Shouts without.*
These joyful sounds proclaim my Juan near—
[*To* VEL] Retire a while till I prepare my lord

To shield thee from the angry nobles' rage.
All were combined to take thy forfeit life.—
Duke. (*Without.*) Throw wide the palace gates—
Let all have entrance.
Duch. His well-known voice—'Tis he, 'tis he himself!
Duke. (*Without.*) Where is my queen?
Duch. Quick let me fly to meet him,
Fly to my hero's breast.—
[VEL. *seizes her, and draws a dagger.*
Vel. Hold, madam, hold,
Thus I arrest your joy.
Duch. Barbarian! monster!
Duke. (*Entering.*) What sounds are these? Horror! Inhuman slave!
Turn thy fell poniard here!
Vel. Approach not, stir not,
Or, by the blackest furies hell ere loosed,
This dagger drinks her blood.
Duke. See, I obey,
I breathe not, stir not, I am rooted here,
Here will I grow for ages.
Duch. Oh, my Juan!
Duke. O horrible! Does Juan live for this?
Cursed be the fatal fire that led my steps
To follow false ambition, while I left
To lurking robbers an unguarded prize;
This gem more worth than crowns or worlds can ransom.
Vel. Take back a name more foul, thou dark usurper.
Was it for this, thy unsuspecting prince,
With lavish bounty, to thy faithless hand
Trusted his royal functions? Thus to arm
'Gainst his own breast, thy black ingratitude.
Duke. Must I endure it?
Duch. Out! false hypocrite!
Thy tyrant's snares were found, his flimsy nets

To catch that precious life long since unravel'd.
Thy conscious cheek avows it.
Vel. Be it so.
Duch. Coward! Perfidious coward! Is it thus,
Thus you requite—
Vel. Thy foolish pity—thus—
Hear me, thou rebel—Is this woman dear?
Duke. O heavens!
Vel. Thy straining eyes, thy agonizing heart,
Thy life's inglorious dotage all proclaim it.
Duch. Peace, devil, peace, nor wound his generous soul
By taunts that fiends might blush at.
Duke. Speak thy purpose.
Vel. Then briefly thus—call off thy traitorous guards,
—The fruits of thy foul treason, every post,
Seiz'd by thy midnight plots, thy rebel arms
Restore again to Spain—Back to the palace
Give me save conduct—To thy oaths I trust not;
It must be done this instant—leave my power
To intercede with Spain for thy full pardon,
And grace to all, whom thy ill-starr'd ambition
Led to this base revolt—else, by my rage!
The boiling rage that works my soul to frenzy,
Thou shalt behold this beauteous bosom gored,
All over gash'd and mangled.
Duch. Strike this instant!
Duke. Hold, ruffian, hold!
Duch. Give me a thousand deaths;
Here let me fall a glorious sacrifice,
Rather than buy my life by such dishonour.
(*To the Duke.*) If thy fond love accept these shameful terms,
That moment is my last—these hands shall end me.
(*To* VEL.) Blood-thirsty tyger, glut thy fury here.
Vel. Her courage blasts my purpose. (*Aside.*) Dost thou brave me?

Duch. Defy thee—yes—feel, do I shrink or tremble?
Serene, undaunted, will I meet the blow;
But ev'ry drop that stains thy reeking hand,
In thy last pangs shall cry for vengeance on thee.
Furies shall seize thee, shake their scorpion whips,
And in thy deafen'd ears still holla murder.
Vel. No more—Resolve—(*To the Duke.*)—Not Heaven itself can save her.
Ha! darkness cover me! he still alive!
Fate thou hast caught me—Every hope is lost.

Enter RAMIREZ *wounded,* ALMADA, RIBIRO, MENDOZA, *and others following—At sight of* RAMIREZ, VELASQUEZ *drops the dagger and is seized—The Duke and Duchess run to each other's arms.*

Duke. I have thee once again, my heart's best treasure,
Saved from the vulture's talons—O dire fiend!
Vel. Unhand me—No—though earth and hell conspire——
Duch. Blasphemer, down! and own a power above thee!
Rib. Secure this monster—Read this paper, madam.
Returning from the charge, we found that wretch
Stretch'd in our way and weltering in his blood;
Earnest he begg'd we should commit to note
These few short words, and bear them to the duke.
That done, he dragged his bleeding body on,
And came to die before him.
Duke. Oh, Ramirez!
Ev'n in this day of joy my heart runs o'er
With sorrow for thy fate—What cruel hand?
Ram. —A villain's hand, yet heaven directed it.
I have not strength to publish all my shame,
That roll contains it—This wide gaping wound,

My deep remorse, may expiate my crime;
But, Oh! that tempter—

Duke. Ha! he faints, support him!
Thy crime, what crime?

Ram. Thy happier star prevail'd,
Else, hadst thou died even by the pious act
That seals our peace above.

Duke. Merciful powers!

Ram. Yet, ere I sink, speak comfort to my soul,
And bless me with forgiveness.

Duke. Take it freely.

Ram. Enough, I die contented. [*He is led off.*

Duch. O my Juan,
Peruse that tale, and wonder—Impious wretch,
Well might my heart stand still—my blood run cold,
And struggling nature murmur strong reluctance
Against my foolish pity, while I meant
To step between thee and the brandish'd bolt,
To rescue from the stroke of righteous justice
The foul suborner of my husband's murder.

Vel. Curse on the coward's fears prevented it!
Wither these sinews that relax'd their hold,
And left thy feeble wing to soar above me.

Duke. Hence with that villain—Drag him from my sight—
Till awful justice doom his forfeit life,
Let heaviest chains secure him—Hence, begone.

Vel. Yes, in your gloomiest dungeons plunge me down.
Welcome congenial darkness—Horrors hail!
No more these loathing eyes shall view that sun,
Whose irksome beams light up thy pageant triumph.
[*He is led off by* Rib. *and others.*

Duke. Thou ever present, all-protecting Power!
Through what dark clouds of thick involving danger
Thy watchful providence has led my steps?
The imagined woes that sunk me in despair,
Thou mad'st the wond'rous instruments to save me.

Duch. I feel, I own the high supremacy—
Yet have I much to ask—Thy victory—
Duke. For that our thanks to this brave man are due.
He chose the post of danger, and exposed
His dauntless breast against the stubborn force
Of steady northern courage.
Alm. Twice was I down,
And twice my prince's valour rescued me.
Duke. For ever hallow'd be the well-poised blade
That saved that reverend head.
Duch. Fortune was kind, Almada, to commit
Your safety to the arm you taught to conquer.
Alm. Henceforth I more shall prize that trifle life,
Since now I owe it to my sovereign's valour.

Enter RIBIRO.

Rib. Vengeance, thy debt is paid—The tyrant's dead.
Duke. Say'st thou Velasquez?
Rib. Ay, what was Velasquez
Dispersed and mangled by the people's rage,
In bloody fragments stains a thousand hands;
Like ravenous wolves by eager famine pinch'd,
With worrying fangs they dragg'd him from my grasp,
And in my sight tore out his reeking entrails.
Duke. His blood be on his head, and may his end,
Provoked by crimes beyond the reach of pardon,
Strike terror to the souls of impious men,
Who own no God, but from his power to punish.
[*Exeunt.*

END OF VOLUME SIXTH.

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